
SIT LUX

CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY:

TRANSLATED FROM THE LATIN

OF

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PHILADELPHIA:
PRESBYTERIAN BOARD OF PUFLICATION.

THE TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

THOSE who are in any measure conversant with the theological works of the age of the Reformation, and of that immediately succeeding it, cannot fail to bear testimony to their value; as presenting the most accurate and luminous views of divine truth, and as constituting a sort of standard of reference and appeal in the present age. Among these works, those of the divines who flourished in the Reformed churches abroad, occupy a distinguished place, and supply a fund of valuable information on every branch of Christian Theology, properly so called. Many of these productions were translated into English immediately or very soon after they appeared; but most of these translations being now out of print, or copies of them very scarce, it is presumed that, without depreciating the value of modern performances, no mean service would be rendered to the Christian public, if new translations were made of the most valuable, and in their own time, most popular, writings of the divines in the continental churches. The volume which is now presented to the public, claims attention as a body of Christian divinity, more concise and perspicuous, and therefore more acceptable to general readers, than similar productions of the same age and school. While it preserves, to a considerable degree, the accuracy of method, so studiously followed in the writings of that age, the author has, by the omission of formal controversies, and, as far as possible, of the scholastic terms in which such controversies were generally conducted, rendered it a suitable work for Christian readers in general, as well as for professed students of Christian theology. This design he probably had in view, when he published a French edition of his work, as the illustrious Calvin published his famous Institutes in the same language, which was that of their country. In

giving the following edition to the public, the translator has endeavoured to present it to the English reader in as plain, perspicuous, and popular a style as possible; he has fully and faithfully given the sense of his author; he has, indeed, omitted a few passages in the original work, either when (though very seldom the case) they appeared to him a needless repetition; or when such passages consisted of quotations from the fathers or the heathen writers, more curious than useful, or when they contained arguments rather subtle than solid; but these instances are altogether very rare, and, it is presumed, will not be of the slightest detriment to the original performance.* In addition to the intrinsic excellence of this work, it will perhaps be an interesting recommendation of it to many readers, that its author may in some measure be regarded as the last of those illustrious and orthodox divines who presided over the church of Geneva, and who contributed, by their indefatigable labours and excellent writings, to render it the bulwark of the Reformation in those parts. For shortly after his death, or to use the words of a living writer, "scarcely had the venerable Benedict Pictet been cold in his grave," when that highly favoured church commenced her grievous declension; the pure and scriptural doctrines, taught by Calvin, Beza, Diodati, and their successors, were exchanged for those crude and reckless attempts of human speculation, which cannot be better comprehended than under the modern and expressive name of Neology; and thus Geneva took her place on the melancholy list of those Christian Churches which have "departed from the faith, and left their first love." May a gracious God speedily restore "the candlestick" to this, and to every other place from which, in his mysterious providence and righteous judgment, it has been taken away. On the whole, it is hoped that this volume will form an acceptable manual of Christian knowledge to those Christian families and individuals who, believing and loving the truth, as it is continually presented before them in this age of privileges, are desirous of obtaining sound, comprehensive, and intelligent views of the whole Christian system.

* He has also taken the trifling liberty of throwing several of the shorter chapters into one, and comprehending them under one general title, when they treated upon one and the same subject.

THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

The friendly reader will allow me to detain him a little, while I explain the nature of the work I have undertaken. But before I do this, it will not, perhaps, be unacceptable briefly to inquire, when that method of teaching Theology, which we follow, commenced, and also very briefly to relate the history of the Scholastic Theology. Every one knows that, in the first ages of the Christian Church, the apostles and their successors handed down to posterity the pure and unadulterated doctrine which they had received from Christ, in a method and style adapted as much as possible to the comprehension of the vulgar; and in the instruction of candidates for baptism, made use of certain short forms, containing the principal heads of Christian doctrine. But this simple method of handling divinity gradually fell into disuse, and another method was invented, which was thought more subtle and refined; as appears from the writings of Dionysius, the pseudo-Areopagite, in the fourth or fifth century, and as would still more clearly appear, if, besides the works of this author, concerning the *Celestial and Ecclesiastical Hierarchies, the Mystic Theology*, &c. we possessed others which have been lost. In the eighth century, John of Damascus, called *Chrysorrhoas* (i. e. golden-stream,) from his eloquence, was the first among the Greek Fathers who reduced Theology to some method, in his four books concerning "the Orthodox Faith," in the first of which he treats of God, the Trinity, the divine nature and attributes; in the second, of the creation, and the various kinds of creatures; in the third, of the incarnation of Christ, and the hypostatical union of his two natures, of Christ's life, death, and descent into hell; in the fourth, of Christ's resurrection and ascension, of faith, and the sacraments,

&c. In the Latin church, Lanfranc, archbishop of Canterbury, the inventor of transubstantiation, is said to have substituted a new method of Theology in the place of the old, A. D., 1070. In the twelfth century, Peter Abelard composed three books of "Introduction to Theology." Then came Peter Lombard, bishop of Paris, who composed four Books of Sentences, in which the sum of Theology is collected from the writings of the Fathers, especially of Augustine, and arranged in the scholastic method. From this period, all that followed Lombard's method, doctrine, and authority, were called the *schoolmen*, after the old name, though with a new meaning.* But it is not my intention, nor do I think it necessary to proceed any farther with the history of the schoolmen. Let it be enough to have cited their names, for, with the exception of a few among them, they obscured rather than illustrated Theology; they corrupted rather than expounded it; and therefore during the times in which they flourished, to use the words of Cornelius Mussus, "the sacred scriptures were neglected, to the inconceivable injury of all." Indeed no one can sufficiently deplore the lot of the Christian church in those ages, when such barbarous words were used for the explanation of Christian doctrines, and every thing was so wrapped up in obscure questions, that a period of nine years was not enough for the proper understanding of the single preface of Scotus to Lombard, and when the most futile and even impious questions were discussed, to the neglect of scripture. This was the reason why the wisest Reformers of the church have entirely banished the Scholastic Theology from its territories; together with its curious, vain, and often impious questions, and devoted themselves entirely to the exposition of God's word. Nevertheless, after the example of the schoolmen, or following rather the method of those who teach the arts and sciences, they were willing to reduce Theology to certain rules, and that with the greatest propriety; but then the divinity which they taught, was not derived from Aristotle and Plato, but from those purer sources — the sacred writings. These divines,

* We have omitted the entire list of scholastic divines from the thirteenth to the fifteenth century, which is given by the author, together with brief notices of some of their works. Among them are the well-known names of Aquinas, Bonaventura, Duns Scotus, and our own Bacon and Bradwardine.

however, did not all follow the same plan, though the result was the same, since they exhibited the same doctrines, defended the same truths, and confuted and overthrew the same errors.

In imitation of their example, I now venture to set forth a work on Christian Theology; not indeed that I presume to compare such a performance as mine with their immortal writings; for I have learned to form a just and modest estimate of my own powers, nor have I ever dreamed of such a reputation as that expressed by the poet—

> Os populi meruisse, et cedro digna locutus
> Linquere nec scombros metuentia opuscula, nec thus.—PERS.

> *To have the praise of all, and leave behind,*
> *A work deserving of immortal fame,*
> *Nor one that fears to share the ignoble fate*
> *Of meaner works.*

I had no other design in view than to satisfy the wishes of our studious youth, who, having eagerly gone through the excellent system of controversial theology,* drawn up by my revered uncle, and most beloved father in Christ, the illustrious Turretine, earnestly requested that they might have given to them a system of didactic theology, in which controversies were left out, and the truth simply and plainly taught. The same request was made by persons of rank and piety, who are fond of religious subjects, and earnestly desire a further acquaintance with them. I have thought it my duty to comply with their wishes, remembering those golden words of Lactantius, "If life is desirable to a wise man, then I could wish to live for no other reason, than that I may do something worthy of life; something that may contribute, if not to the art of speaking, (and in fact I possess but a very inconsiderable vein of eloquence,) yet at least to the art of living, which is the most necessary and important; therefore I shall consider myself to have lived long enough, and to have fulfilled the duty of man, if my labours shall free any of my fellow creatures from error, and direct them in the path to heaven."

No one must look in this work for a finely-polished and highly-wrought style. I can promise nothing of the kind, and I can acknowledge it far to exceed my powers;

* Which admirable system Pictet appears to have made his model.

indeed I had no thoughts of the press, while delivering these pages to be noted down by my auditors. I have aimed at a style that is plain and familiar, and have consulted only perspicuity; which if my readers shall think I have attained, I shall be highly gratified, if otherwise, I shall proportionably regret it. I have sometimes employed words not of the purest Latin, nor used by classic authors, because understood by all; though I have abstained, as far as I could, from using the barbarous expressions of the school-divines; or, if at any time I have been compelled to employ them (which is very seldom) I have immediately explained them; for I am well aware, how unpopular the terms and distinctions of the schoolmen are in the present age, and that their expressions tend to make a style obscure rather than luminous.

Innumerable questions, discussed in larger *common places* of divinity, have been left out, as being of little importance, and rather curious than useful; many others also, agitated among the divines of the day, have been omitted, from that particular regard to peace, which I have, and trust shall always have: if I have ever touched upon them, I have done so in a manner which I hope, and am even confident, will afford no ground of complaint. Reasons and proofs we have given, according to their weight, and not their number, and many we have passed by, not always because we were dissatisfied with those which we have not produced, but because we were more satisfied with others, and considered these sufficient, and were also afraid of wearying our readers. We have sometimes quoted passages from the fathers, for the sake of those who have commenced reading their writings. We have also quoted from the heathens, and not without just grounds, since Solomon employed not only the Israelites, but also the Tyrians and Sidonians, in building the temple of the Lord; and Moses enriched the tabernacle with Egyptian gold. Not indeed that we imagine that heavenly truth, which shines, like a pure virgin, in its own native loveliness, has any need of the trappings, ornaments, and perfumes of heathen philosophy, or that this spiritual sun has any occasion to borrow light from the dusky glare of carnal wisdom; but only to make it clear, how consistent reason itself is with holy scripture.

If at any time I dissent from some divines, I trust they will not put a wrong construction on such a difference. Men have always been allowed to differ without com-

promising friendship. I ardently desire their sacred friendship: I bow to their learning; I admire their virtues, and I constantly pray to Almighty God, that he would long spare their lives for the good of the schools and churches. I entreat all my readers to give a kind and candid attention to the pages of this work, and if anything is handled rightly, let them give praise to God, if otherwise, let them pardon the writer. And now, farewell, indulgent reader, and commend me to God in your prayers.

CONTENTS.

BOOK I.

OF THE EXISTENCE OF GOD AND HIS WORD.

BOOK II.

OF GOD IN THE UNITY AND TRINITY.

BOOK III.

OF THE CREATION AND PROVIDENCE OF GOD.

BOOK IV.

OF THE FALL.

BOOK V.

OF THE DECREE OF GOD CONCERNING MAN'S SALVATION.

BOOK VI.

OF REDEMPTION BY CHRIST THE MEDIATOR.

BOOK VII.

OF CALLING AND FAITH.

BOOK VIII.

OF JUSTIFICATION AND SANCTIFICATION.

BOOK IX.

OF GLORIFICATION.

BOOK X.

OF THE CHURCH.

BOOK XI.

OF THE SACRAMENTS.

CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY.

BOOK THE FIRST.

OF THE EXISTENCE OF GOD; AND OF HIS WORD.

CHAPTER I.

OF THE EXISTENCE OF GOD.

Since Theology is the doctrine which treats of God and divine things, it must, first of all, be inquired,—Whether *a God really exists*, that is, whether there be allowed to exist a Being who is infinite, all-perfect, supreme, and the cause of the existence of all other beings. I confess, indeed, that this principle is so evident, that we ought rather to take it for granted, than attempt to prove it; but the treating of this subject is rendered necessary by the infatuation of many persons, who labour to persuade themselves and others that there is no Deity. Now men of this character, or rather, I should say, these monsters of men, may be refuted by many arguments. I shall bring forth the principal arguments which appear to me the most unexceptionable.

The *first* argument is drawn from the extensive, goodly, and orderly fabric of the universe, and from the beautiful harmony of all created things, destined, as they are, to the use and service of each other; all which could have proceeded only from a most wise and perfect Being, as every one must admit who is willing to exercise his reason. For, to maintain that these things were united by an accidental concurrence of atoms, or indivisible particles, is to show a want, not merely of

understanding, but almost of sense itself. 'I cannot conceive,' says Cicero (*De Nat. Deor.* lib. II.) 'why the man who thinks this possible, should not also imagine that, if innumerable forms of letters, whether of gold, or of any other kind, should be thrown together into some receptacle, there could be accidentally made out of these, when shaken out upon the ground, annals capable of being read; whereas I doubt whether chance could effect any thing of the kind, even as far as a single verse. But if a concurrence of atoms can produce a world, why not a portico, a house, or a temple? which would be less laborious, and indeed far easier.'

The *second* argument is derived from this fact, that all things in the world have, as it were, certain ends which they keep in view, although those ends are not always known to us. But who has so directed, or indeed could possibly so direct, all things to certain ends, but an all-perfect and infinite Being? It cannot be said that every individual thing sets before itself such ends, for we know that the greater part of them are destitute of reason; and if some are capable of design, yet they perform many things without design. For not even man purposes within himself how he shall digest his food, and distribute its parts through the different members of his body. Some cause, therefore, must be laid down, which directs all these things. To say that nature does all this, is absurd, unless by nature is meant a substance or essence distinct from natural things, and which is most wise and powerful, which, in fact, is *God himself.*

The *third* argument is drawn from the consideration of the *matter* of which the world is made, and of *motion*, which has been given to matter. For matter is either eternal and self-existent, or it was produced out of nothing by another and a supreme Being. That it is not eternal or self-existent, clearly appears from the very great absurdity of ascribing to a most imperfect being or existence, such as matter is, what is the greatest of all perfections, namely, eternity and self-existence. If, on the contrary, it was produced out of nothing, by another and a supreme Being, that Being can be no other than God, since infinite power is necessary to produce any thing out of nothing; which infinite power belongs to that Being only, whom we call God. Again, either motion is of the essence of matter, or some one has impressed motion upon it. Now, that motion is of the essence of matter, no one,

I think, in his senses will believe; at least no one will maintain that such regular motion as that to which the world owes its origin, *essentially* belongs to matter. We must needs therefore confess that some Being impressed motion upon matter, or, at least, directed motion to the formation of a world, rather than a rude disordered mass. Now every one, who is not wilfully blind, can perceive that such a Being is no other than the all-perfect Being whom we call God.

The *fourth* argument is derived, not only from the construction of the human body, admired by every one, though enough by no one, but also from our soul; for it is either eternal, or produced out of matter, or created by some other Being. No one will now* say that it is eternal. To say that it is produced from matter is most absurd; for the effect is not more noble than its cause, and who can believe that out of matter, which is extended, gross, and inanimate, there could have been produced a spiritual and thinking essence, one of so excellent a nature, that it comprehends the whole universe in its thoughts, beholds the present, remembers the past, and looks forward to the future:—one, which invents and cultivates so many arts, performs so many wonderful things; which, not content with this world and sublunary objects, aspires to God and to eternity, and runs through heaven, and earth, and the seas, although lying concealed in a single corner of the world. Such an essence then must have an author; but who it is, if it is not God, no one can point out. Add to this the wonderful union of the soul with the body, which union is so close and intimate, that certain motions take place in the body, in obedience to certain thoughts of the soul; and, on the contrary, some thoughts take place in the soul, in compliance with some motions of the body, although the soul is ignorant in what way the members are set in motion according to its will, and how it is that at the motion of these members various thoughts are raised within it.

The *fifth* argument is taken from the agreement of almost all nations, even the most barbarous, upon this subject. For how is it that men of almost every country in the earth, differing in education, customs, manners, and habits, believe in any thing as a God, rather than

* That is, whatever the ancient philosophers may have maintained, no one in these modern days will affirm it.

believe in no God? and that the proudest of mankind had rather bow down to wood and stone, than be without any deity at all? "What nation is there," says Cicero, "or what race of men, which has not, without any previous instruction, some idea of the gods? Now that in which all men agree must necessarily be true." "If you go through the earth," says Plutarch, "you will perhaps observe cities without walls, without letters, sunk in the greatest ignorance; but we shall see not one which does not worship the Deity. But even if, as some assert, there are some nations to be found, among whom no traces of religion are discovered, it ought not to seem strange that barbarians, who have in some measure thrown aside the human nature, and assumed a kind of brutal wildness, have lost that which is peculiar to man. Without understanding, there is no notion of a Deity, and no sense of religion, and therefore these cannot apply to the brutes, and consequently not to those who have almost degenerated into brutes."

The *last* argument may be sought from the power of conscience, which is the inseparable attendant on crime that has been, or is about to be, committed, and the feeling of which cannot be blunted, nor its judgment be avoided, nor its accusation eluded, nor its testimony corrupted, nor its bail deserted; nothing being more tenacious than its grasp, nothing more bitter than its torment. Whence is it that conscience is stung when a crime is committed, even though no witnesses are present, and no danger threatens from others? Whence is it that the transgressor secretly trembles at his guilt, and is afraid even of the most trifling noise? Nor is there any exception to this fact in the case of those who acknowledged no superior on earth, and to whom their subjects did not blush to offer incense as unto gods. Caligula, for example—who, although no one is said to have carried his contempt of Deity further than he did, yet trembled exceedingly when he heard the noise of thunder. Whence all this, I ask, but from the consciousness of there being some Judge, whom the offender, although he sees him not, yet every where dreads? We wave other arguments, which might be added: I shall only subjoin this remark, that, while the atheistical doctrine gives a license to every crime, the opposite doctrine influences men to the practice of every Christian and moral virtue.

CHAPTER II.

OF THE NATURAL KNOWLEDGE OF GOD.

From what has been said, it appears that we can, by the power of nature, know God, and that God himself is the author of this knowledge, both by that notion of himself which he has engraven on the minds of all men, and by the excellent works he has done, from the contemplation of which it necessarily follows that God exists. Hence it is that the natural knowledge of God may be considered in two points of view, as *innate* and *acquired*. The *innate* notion of the Deity is that which is so peculiar to man, that, as soon as he is capable of using his reason, he cannot avoid very often thinking of God, and is not able entirely to reject the thoughts of him, although he sometimes may attempt it. The *acquired* notion is that which is drawn from the careful observation of created things.

Both these notions are mentioned in the scriptures. Paul alludes to the innate when he declares that the Gentiles have "the work of the law written on their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts, in the meanwhile, accusing, or else excusing, one another." (Rom. xi. 15.) For this work of the law, written on their hearts, is that *innate* notion of which we speak. It is said to be written on the hearts, not on tables of stone, as the law of Moses. The same apostle speaks of the *acquired* notion, when he says, "the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and godhead." (Rom. i. 20.) The Psalmist also,—"the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy work." (Psalm xix. 1.) To this also may be referred the words of Job, "Ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee, &c." (Job xii. 7—9.) The very heathens acknowledged this. Aristotle,—if indeed he is the author of the Book upon the World,—declares that, *As the soul by which we live is discovered by its works, so the Deity, who is invisible to every mortal nature, is seen by his works. Who is*

there so infatuated, says Cicero, *who, looking up to heaven, does not perceive that there are deities, and imagines that chance can effect those things which are made with so much understanding, that no one, by any power of art, can apprehend their order and revolution?* And if Diodorus Siculus is to be credited, Zaleucus, the lawgiver of the Locrians, enacted a law, which obliged the citizens to acknowledge a deity from the contemplation of the heavens.

Both these kinds of knowledge are a great proof of God's goodness to man, whom he would not leave altogether without any knowledge of himself, in order that they might render unto him, when known, the tribute of love, praise, thanksgiving, worship, and obedience. At the same time they form a bond of society, and prevent men from becoming a prey to each other. They are also an incentive to seek after a clearer revelation, and are sufficient to leave every one, who abuses his natural light, without any excuse. This also is the source from which all civil laws have been derived, although they have frequently contracted much corruption from the impurity of the channels through which they have passed.

This knowledge of God, together with those common notions, makes up a system of natural theology, of which, if any one should desire an abridgment, and should wish to inquire how much knowledge the Gentiles were able to derive from the dictates of reason, and from the works of creation and providence, we may reply, that the Gentiles were capable of attaining the following truths—That there is a God, and but one God—that God is none of those things which are visible and corruptible, but some being very far superior to them—that he is just, good, powerful, and all-wise—that God is the creator of the universe—that the world is governed by his providence, as Cicero and several others acknowledged—that he is eternal and happy—that he must be worshipped and praised—that rectitude and honesty are to be practised—that parents ought to be honoured, and that we should not do to any one else what we would not have done to ourselves—that all men ought to endeavour to propitiate God's favour—that the soul is immortal, and that there is a judgment to come, (the Druids, according to Cæsar, believed in the soul's immortality, which also was the opinion of Plato)—that those who do evil actions are worthy of death. (Rom. i. 32.)

CHAPTER III.

OF THE SUPERNATURAL KNOWLEDGE OF GOD.

That, besides this natural knowledge of God, another revelation of a supernatural kind was necessary, was not unknown to the heathens themselves; among whom it was a received opinion, that, in addition to reason, man needed a kind of divine wisdom. For those who introduced among them religious rites and ceremonies before unknown, would not have found it necessary to pretend that they had conferences with divinities, as Lycurgus with Apollo, Minos with Jupiter, Numa with Egeria, and many others, had not all men been persuaded that the right mode of worshipping the Deity must be drawn from a revelation of him.

There are two principal arguments which prove the necessity of a divine revelation. *First*, the imperfection of natural knowledge, which was insufficient either for the true knowledge, or for the true worship, of God, and which could not, in any way, comfort the human mind against the fear of death, and under the consciousness of sin, because it could not point out the mode of satisfying the divine justice, and propitiating the divine favour; hence the heathen who possessed this knowledge are described by Paul as "without hope and without God in the world." (Eph. ii. 12.) The *second* argument is drawn from the great corruption of mankind since the fall, their speedy forgetfulness of God and blindness in divine things, their propensity to all kind of error, and especially to the invention of new and false religions. If there were any among the heathen, who worshipped the one God, there were far more who worshipped innumerable deities, even all kinds of creatures, from the grass of the field to the stars of the sky, not even excepting such animals as wolves, dogs, and crocodiles. Nay, they often knew not to what deity they were paying homage; whence that common form which they used in their addresses to a deity, *whoever thou art;* and in the Capitol at Rome, there was a sacred shield, with this inscription, *To the genius of the city, whether male or female.* And Vossius, in his treatise on Idolatry ex-

cellently compares the case of the heathen to that of the blind man recorded in the ninth chapter of John; for, as the latter beheld the Son of God, and yet knew not that he was the Son of God, so the former beheld God in his works, and yet closed their eyes against his real nature and perfections. A second revelation, therefore, was necessary, in which God might not only cause to be known, in a clearer manner, his own perfections, which he had revealed in the first, but also discover new perfections, and especially reveal "the mystery of godliness."

This supernatural revelation was made through the medium of the word; for, after God had used mute teachers to instruct mankind, he opened his own sacred lips: and after he had, "at sundry times, and in divers manners, spoken unto the fathers by the prophets, in these last days" he has condescended to "speak unto us by his Son." (Heb. i. 1.) Thus also David, having represented the heavens "declaring the glory of God, and the firmament shewing his handy work," proceeds to make mention of the word; "The law of the Lord," he says, "is perfect, converting the soul." (Psalm xix. 1, 7.) Now, that theology, a system of which we are here framing, contains the body of revealed doctrine, and is called *supernatural* to distinguish it from that which is *natural.* But although the two systems differ from each other in the mode of revelation, in the number of things revealed, in their perspicuity and effects, yet are they in strict harmony, and render each other mutual service; for, as Tertullian observes, *God hath sent nature before as an instructress, purposing to send revelation after, in order that, as a disciple of nature, thou mayest more easily hearken to revelation.*

CHAPTER IV.

OF THE WORD OF GOD.

The *word* was a very suitable means of revealing God, and instructing men, to whom he had given the faculty

of hearing and reasoning, and one which bestows great honour on mankind; for what more honourable than to be favoured with an address from the Deity? Now this word was not at first committed to writing, on account of the longevity of the patriarchs, the small number of mankind, and the frequency of divine manifestations. But after the human race began to multiply, and to spread through different parts of the world; when Satan walked abroad with his innumerable devices and wiles, and robbed men of the truth with the greatest ease, because it was not yet recorded in letters, from which it could be drawn and appealed to, and falsehood refuted; God, taking pity on the human race, was pleased to commit his word to writing. By this means the truth could be more easily preserved, and transmitted to later generations, for "*the gift of letters is truly divine*," as Quintilian remarks, and it could also not so easily be corrupted, or at least could be more easily and successfully rescued from corruptions. By this means also, there was no necessity for the truth to be repeated and restored by continually new revelations, and thus a certain and fixed rule of faith was established. With the same design, we know that the edicts of kings or people were either engraved on brass, or inscribed on public records.

The Almighty condescended to establish and sanction this mode of revealing himself to men, by his own example, when, with his own finger, he wrote the decalogue on tables of stone, and afterwards, through Moses and the other prophets, continued this method of preserving and propagating the truth. Thus he commanded Moses, saying, "Write this for a memorial in a book;" and again, "Write thou these words, for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee, and with Israel." (Exod. xvii. 14; xxxiv. 27.) The same command may be seen in Isaiah viii. 1; Jer. xxx. 2; Hab. ii. 2. The case was the same under the New Testament; for, after the only-begotten Son of God had drawn forth the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven from the bosom of the Father, and revealed them unto men, he was pleased to commit them to writing, by the instrumentality of the apostles; and this he did, not only by commanding them to "teach all nations," which could not always have been done by word of mouth, as they had to instruct the most distant and also future generations, as well as their own, but also by expressly

enjoining them to write, as he said to John, "What thou seest, write in a book, &c.; write the things which thou hast seen," &c. (Rev. i. 11, 19,) and by influencing them to write, and suggesting to them, by inspiration, what they were to write. And here we may well admire the wisdom of God. While the church was in its infancy, the Lord instructed it by word of mouth, which is the most simple mode of revelation, in the same way as nurses teach their children. Afterwards, when it was in its childhood and youth under the law, he taught it both by word of mouth and by writing, as boys and youth are instructed both from the lips of a master, and by the reading of books. At length, when arrived at maturity under the gospel, the church was confined to the scripture, as adult persons may derive their instruction from books by their own understandings.

Not all the apostles wrote, nor was it necessary; it was enough for some of them to write what was approved by the rest; nor is it to be wondered at, that those holy men chiefly adopted the epistolary method, it being the general custom in that age to convey instruction by letters. Thus the rescripts of the emperors were conveyed by letters, and this simple mode of instruction was suited to the gospel, that the cross of Christ might not be made of none effect by the enticing words of man's wisdom; and indeed no other mode of writing was so adapted to a speedy propagation of the gospel.

CHAPTER V.

OF THE BOOKS OF SCRIPTURE.

Having considered the reasons for which the word of God has been committed to writing, we must now ascertain where that record is to be found. Shall we seek it among the heathens? No book of theirs is met with which can be accounted divine. All is uncertain, fabulous, full of superstition and idolatry. Shall we look for it among the Mahomedans? They have the Koran, we confess; but that book is hardly worthy of a man in

his senses; and whatever good is in it, has entirely been derived from the Jews and Christians. Truly no where else must the word of God be sought for but in the books of the Old and New Testament, as will be proved hereafter. We will first speak of the books of the Old Testament. These are the books which God delivered to the Jewish people; they are divided by the Jews into the law, the prophets, and the hagiographa, (*i. e.* sacred writings,) a distribution intimated by our Lord under the names of "Moses, the prophets, and the Psalms." (Luke xxiv. 44.) The law contains the Pentateuch (*i. e.* five books,) viz. Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. The author of these books is universally believed to be Moses, the son of Amram, and great-grandson of the patriarch Levi; although in them are to be found the names of certain places unknown in Moses's time, and other things which appear to have been added by Ezra, or some other sacred writer.

The *first* book is called *Genesis*, because it records the origin of all things, and contains the history of 2369 years. The *second* is called *Exodus*, because it commences with the deliverance of the oppressed Israelites, and their departure from Egypt into the promised land of Canaan; it comprises the history of 149 or 145 years. The *third* is named *Leviticus*, because it describes the laws imposed on the posterity of Levi, who formed the priesthood. The *fourth* is called *Numbers*, because it contains an account of the census of the Israelites made by Moses and Aaron; it comprehends a period of 39 years. The *fifth* is called *Deuteronomy*, because it is, as it were, a repetition of the law, and embraces a period of two months, or one month and a few days.

The *Prophets* are distinguished as the *former* and the *latter*. The *former* are *Joshua*, the *Judges*, *Ruth*, the *two books of Samuel*, and two of *the Kings;* the *latter* are *Isaiah*, *Jeremiah*, *Ezekiel*, *Daniel*, *Hosea*, *Joel*, *Amos*, and the rest down to *Malachi*. The first book of the *former prophets* is called *Joshua*, as it contains the history of the exploits of that great leader, after the death of Moses, whom he is supposed to have succeeded about A. M. 2550, or 2554. This book was not entirely written by Joshua, since many things are related in it which happened after his death. It is not even certain that Joshua himself was the writer of the book, although it appears to have been composed out of his records, (Josh. xxiv. 26.) It contains the history of about twenty-five

or twenty-seven years. The *second* book is called *Judges*, because it gives the ecclesiastical and civil history of the Israelites under the thirteen judges, from the time of Joshua to that of Eli, embracing a period of 288 or 299 years. It is uncertain who was the author of this book. The Jews think it was Samuel, others Ezra. The government of these Judges was different from that of kings in these particulars. It was an extraordinary office, like the Roman dictatorship; those who bore it acted under the immediate influence of the Spirit. The succession of these offices was not immediate or continued; and they were put into their office by divine appointment. The *third* book is *Ruth*, an appendix to the book of Judges, with which some of the Jews join it, though others place it among the Hagiographa. It contains the history of Ruth, whose name therefore it bears, and who lived in the time of Eli, according to some; in that of Eliud or Shamgar, according to others; or, as most think, in the age of Gideon. The author is uncertain; said to be Samuel, or Ezra, or some other. The book was put into the canon for the purpose of preserving, in a connected form, the genealogy of Christ. The *fourth* book is the *first* and also the *second* of Samuel, called by the Greek and Latin interpreters the first and second Kings. It contains the history of events in the times of Eli, Samuel, Saul, and David, for the space of 120 years and upwards. There is a dispute about the author. It is probable that Samuel wrote a history of his own times and those of Eli; that Nathan and Gad composed annals of the events which took place under the reigns of Saul and David; and that afterwards some divinely inspired person, either Ezra or some other, reduced them into order, and gave both books the name of *Samuel*. The *fifth* book is the *first* and also the *second* of the *Kings*, (called by the Greek and Latin interpreters the third and fourth) containing the history of the kings of Judah and Israel for about 440 years.

The *latter prophets* are distinguished, as the *greater* and the *lesser;* the *greater* are *four*, including Daniel, contrary to the wishes of the Jews. The first is *Isaiah*, who lived unto the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, and as some think, Manasseh, by whom the Talmudists say he was sawn asunder. He began to prophesy about A. C. 780. The second is *Jeremiah*, who began to prophesy in the reign of Josiah, about A. C. 650 or 620. He prophesied, first in Judea, then in Egypt,

after Zedekiah was carried captive into Babylon. Thus he prophesied for at least forty-three years. The third is *Ezekiel*, who prophesied in Chaldea, whither he had been carried captive, about A. C. 600 or 590. He is said to have prophesied about twenty years. The fourth is *Daniel*, who prophesied during the captivity, at the same time as Ezekiel, or, as some think, a little before him. The Jews improperly strike him out of the list of the prophets, though a testimony is borne to him as a prophet, and one of the greatest of prophets, not only by Josephus, but also by Ezekiel, (Ezek. xxviii. 3,) and by Christ, (Matt. xxiv. 15,) and by some Jews themselves, which testimony is confirmed by his wonderful predictions of the changes in the church and the commonwealth, both before and after the Messiah's appearance, under the Babylonians, Persians, Greeks, and Romans, and especially under Antiochus.

The *minor prophets* are *twelve* in number. The first is *Hosea*, who prophesied in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, for sixty years, about A. C. 800 or 820. The second is *Joel*, who, as some think, lived under Josiah about A. C. 650, but, according to others, was cotemporary with Hosea or with Jonah. The third is *Amos*, who flourished under Uzziah, or Jeroboam II., about A. C. 780. The fourth is *Obadiah*, the age of whose prophecy is unknown. The Jews think him to be the same that is mentioned (1 Kings xviii. 3, 4,) in the days of Ahaz. Some think he lived A. C. 785 The fifth is *Jonas*, who lived under Jeroboam II., king of Israel, about A. C. 835, 800, or 785. The sixth is *Micah*, under Jotham, Ahaz, and Ahaziah, cotemporary with Isaiah and Hosea. The seventh is *Nahum*, whom some make cotemporary with Isaiah; others place him in the reign of Jehoiachim, others of Manasseh; by some he is placed before, by others after, the captivity. The eighth is *Habakkuk*, whose age is also uncertain, perhaps under Manasseh, or under Josiah. The Jews consider him to be the son of the Shunamite, from the Hebrew word, which is found in 2 Kings iv. 16. The ninth is *Zephaniah*, cotemporary with Jeremiah in the days of Josiah. The tenth is *Haggai*, who prophesied after the captivity, in the second year of Darius, about A. C. 515 or 510. Jerome records it as the opinion of some, that he was an angel concealed under a human form. The eleventh is *Zechariah*, whose prophecies began in the second year of Darius,

and who is considered by most persons to be the son of Barachias, whose death Christ mentions (Matt. xxiii. 35.) The last is *Malachi*, concerning whom there is much dispute, some believing him to be Esdras, others an angel: he prophesied long after the completion of the second temple.

The *Hagiographa* are—1. The *Chronicles*, which relate the histories omitted in the other historical books, or else more fully repeat and enlarge upon the accounts contained in the rest; the author is uncertain; probably several prophets wrote the book.—II. The book of *Esther*, of which, not Ezra, but rather Mordecai was the author. It is however doubtful; for some ascribe it to Joachim, the priest, and that too, after the Babylonish captivity, under Darius Hystaspis.—III. *Ezra*, which relates the events that took place in the church from the first year of Cyrus to the seventh year of Artaxerxes. *Ezra* wrote as some think, about A. C. 468, or sooner, according to others.—IV. *Nehemiah*, which describes the rebuilding of Jerusalem, and also the reformation of the people after their return from captivity. It is called by the Jews the second book of Ezra, since it made up one volume with the book of Ezra. It contains a history from the twentieth year of Artaxerxes to the end of the Persian monarchy under Darius Codomannus.—V. The *Psalms of David*, so called because most of them were written by him. Others are ascribed to Solomon, Asaph, Heman and Ethan. Some are thought to have been composed since the captivity. Eighty-two have the name of David prefixed; twenty-five are without any inscription.—VI. The *Proverbs*, a book make up of the sentences of Solomon, with the exception of some chapters. Solomon himself arranged them in order, or one of the prophets after his time, (Prov. xxv. 1.)—VII. *Ecclesiastes*, of which Solomon was also the author, is a kind of sermon on repentance; and so far is it from denying the immortality of the soul, as some profane persons allege, that the whole book tends to the confirmation of this truth.—VIII. The *Song of Songs*, or *Canticles*, ascribed to Solomon, the subject of which is both the typical, and the true Solomon, i. e. Christ.—IX. *Job*, the author of which is uncertain. Some say it was Moses, others one of Job's friends, or Job himself; others say it was some writer about the times of David and Solomon.—X. The *Lamentations of Jeremiah*, which are usually added to his prophecies. Thus far concern-

ing the books of the Old Testament; for no more are reckoned by the Jews, who are our librarians.

The books of the New Testament, which were written by the evangelists and apostles for the instruction of Christians, are twenty-seven in number; five historical, fourteen of Paul's epistles, seven epistles of the other apostles, and one prophetical book, viz. the Revelation. Of the historical books, the *first* is the gospel of *Matthew*, which is thought by some to have been written in the thirty-ninth or forty-first year of the common æra; by others, in the forty-eighth. Whether he wrote in Hebrew, or in Greek, is disputed by the learned. He is said to have travelled into Ethiopia in Asia, and there to have suffered martyrdom in the city of Naddaver, or according to others, in Hierapolis in Parthia. The *second* is the gospel of *Mark*, who wrote about the year 43, or long after; not in Latin, as some think, but in Greek; for the subscription of the Syriac gospel, which runs thus, *Here ends the holy gospel of the preaching of Mark, who spoke and preached in Latin at Rome*, is of no authority. It is uncertain what kind of death he died; for it is a fabulous narrative which some rccord, of his being seized by his persecutors, while engaged in his sacred office, and dragged along with a rope round his neck, till he yielded up his soul to God. The *third* is the gospel of *Luke*, the helper of Paul, and a physician, not a painter, although wonderful stories are related by some concerning his skill in painting; he wrote as some maintain, about the year 53 or 56, or as others, in the year 58. He is supposed to have lived 84 years, and to have been buried at Constantinople; some say he was martyred in Bithynia; others that he died at Ephesus, or at Rome, not long after Paul's first release from prison. Nicephorus relates that he was hanged upon an olive tree. The *fourth* is the gospel of *John*, written about the end of the first century, whether in the Isle of Patmos, or after his return, is doubtful; the latter is more probable. There are various accounts of the author, many of which are uncertain, some false. The *fifth* is the *Acts of the Apostles*, written by Luke about the year 58; it contains the history of twenty-eight years.

Of the fourteen epistles of Paul, the following appears to be the order. The first and second to the *Thessalonians* were written in the year 49, or, as others think, 52 or 54, either at Athens, according to the common sub-

scription, or at Corinth. The epistle to the *Galatians* was written in the year 53, or 56, or 59, either at Rome, according to the subscription, or at Antioch, or at Ephesus; and the first epistle to the *Corinthians* the same year either at Philippi, or at Ephesus. The second epistle to the *Corinthians* came out a little after, perhaps at the commencement of the year 60; whether from Macedonia, or from Philippi, or from Ephesus, is uncertain. The epistle to the *Romans* is thought to have been written in the year 60, after those to the Corinthians, or as some think, in the year 54 or 58. The epistles to the *Philippians*, to *Philemon*, to the *Ephesians*, and to the *Hebrews* are supposed to have been written during his first imprisonment at Rome. We reckon the epistle to the Hebrews among Paul's epistles; and this is unanswerably proved by the celebrated Spanheim, both from the passage in 2 Peter iii. 14, 15, and the testimony of the Greek fathers, such as Justin, Irenæus, Clemens Alexandrinus, Origen, Basil, Chrysostom, and many others, who have all agreed in ascribing this epistle to Paul; and also from the testimony of many Latin fathers, from the phraseology, and the peculiar art of Paul in applying the prophetic oracles; from the method which is usual with the apostle; from the salutation, and the signature with his own hand according to his custom (2 Thess. iii. 17), also from the "bonds," which he mentions (Heb. x. 34) and which he frequently alludes to in other epistles, and from the circumstance of the author writing from Italy, and mentioning Timothy, all which things apply to Paul; and, finally, from the consideration that to no one is the epistle ascribed with greater likelihood of truth. The epistle to the *Colossians*, the first to *Timothy*, and that to *Titus*, are supposed to have been written between his first and second imprisonment; and in his last imprisonment, a little before his death, the second epistle to *Timothy* was written at Rome, in the year 64. Concerning the times, in which the other epistles of *Peter*, *James*, *John*, and *Jude*, were written, nothing certain can be said. The book of *Revelation* is thought to have been written in the year 95.

9. These then are the books of which the written word of God consists, as the Jews believe, if the question relates to the books of the Old Testament; and as Christians believe, if the question relates to those of the New Testament also; for, although there was for some time a doubt concerning some of the latter, as concern-

ing the second epistle of Peter, that of James, of Jude, and the second and third of John, that to the Hebrews, and the Revelation, yet it is certain there was not this doubt universally, nor always. One remark must be added, viz. that at first the books of the Old Testament were written in Hebrew, except some chapters in the Chaldee dialect, in Daniel and Ezra, and also Jeremiah xi.; the books of the New Testament, in Greek, because this language was the most known among the nations, whom God was pleased to call, more known than the Latin itself; for, as Cicero observes, *While the Latin language was confined to its own territories*, (small enough) *the Greek was understood by almost all nations.*

CHAPTER VI.

OF THE DIVINITY OF THE SCRIPTURE BOOKS.

Thus far we have seen, in what books the word of God is believed to be found; but, because it might be doubted whether they are really divine, as they are accounted to be, we must now establish the truth of this point. In order to do this, we must examine those *marks or characters*, which we conceive ought to exist in books divinely inspired, and by which a divine work can be distinguished from one merely human; we must then ascertain whether these characters are applicable to the books enumerated in the former chapter, only premising these two observations;—first, that we must not separate one character from the other, for any one of these characters might be discovered in a human writing; secondly, that it is not necessary for *all* these characters to be found in *each* book. Now the attentive inquirer will find the following marks or characters of the divine origin of any writing. 1. To speak nothing but the truth. 2. To reveal those mysteries, which cannot proceed from the human mind, which yet are in strict harmony with the natural ideas God has impressed on the mind. 3. To direct our thoughts and our worship wholly to the true God. 4. So to instruct the mind,

as to satisfy and set at rest the most insatiable desire after knowledge. 5. To teach men by the most holy precepts to love God above all things, and to renounce every species of iniquity. 6. To be always consistent with itself, and to exhibit no contradiction. 7. To teach those things, which calm all the passions of the mind, and fill it with indescribable peace and joy, bringing it into such subjection, that it is compelled under a sweet, yet most powerful influence, to obey the laws of God. 8. To predict those things, which no human being could foreknow, and which were fulfilled in due time. If the book in which all these characters exist, is not divine, I know not what can be divine; we will now see whether such marks exist in the books of the Old and New Testament.

With respect to the *first* character, it is easy to shew, that *there is nothing in these books, which is not most true.* For if there were any thing, the truth of which might be doubted, it would be certainly the stories related by Moses, or by the apostles. But that these stories are authentic we may prove in the following manner. To begin with Moses—if his stories are false, he must have been a very great impostor, deserving universal hatred; for it is not likely that he was deceived by any other person. But that he was not an impostor is proved, first, because it can hardly be conceived how so great and shameful an impostor could, for the purpose of favouring his artful design, have invented a most sacred and excellent law, from which other laws have borrowed whatever good they possess. Again, we cannot conceive that he would have forged events, the falsehood of which all could have proved; for he relates things which took place in the presence of 600,000 men, who could have easily convicted him of lying. Nor can it be conceived, how it is, that not a single person out of so many, of whom the greater part often rose against Moses in rebellion, ever accused him of this imposture, or at least ever assailed his memory after his death. Moreover we cannot understand, what design he could have in view in forging these things, since he was entirely free from the desire of gain, or glory, indeed so ingenuous, as not to conceal his own faults. If he wrote what was false, how could there remain so long among the Jews the very records of the facts related by Moses, such as the *manna*, which was kept in a golden urn, *Aaron's rod*, the *brazen serpent*, the *tables of stone* on

which the law was written, the *ark of the covenant*, besides the *feasts* commemorative of various events, and many other things? Lastly, we may add the testimonies of the heathens, who have not ventured to refuse to Moses the praise of being a veracious writer. Nor is there any foundation for believing, that the Israelites united with Moses in his imposture, in order to gain great glory to the nation. For, if they had thus united with Moses, why did they not blot out of his books those things, which they must have seen would brand the nation with disgrace, viz. their frequent rebellions, and very grievous sins? Again, would a people so "stiff-necked," have so readily submitted to the intolerable yoke of a very severe law, which punished the least transgression, if they had really believed that it was a mere figment of Moses, and had not been convinced of his divine calling, and of the truth of his assertions?

There can be no doubt as to the testimony of the apostles also; for, in the *first* place, no one can imagine them to *have been deceived*, since they do not testify of facts which took place long before their own times, or in any other part of the world, and which they might have heard from the uncertain report of others; but those, in which they had the evidence of their own senses, and that too, not once or twice only, but for many days; not in a slight or cursory manner, but for a continuance of time, during which they sometimes doubted and hesitated, till they were fully persuaded of the truth. Again, the question was not about difficult matters, in which simple and illiterate people might easily have been mistaken; but about facts before their eyes—such as the resurrection of Christ, with whom they had so often associated. Lastly, it cannot be said that their faculties were deranged, for they exhibit no signs of derangement; the very contrary is shown, both in their words and in their actions. *Secondly* it is not conceivable, that the apostles wished to *deceive* mankind; their whole life proves them incapable of any fraud, the enemies of our religion being judges. Neither can we imagine what good they could have proposed to themselves by a fraud. Those who lie expect some advantage from lying; for to deceive for the mere sake of deceiving, is hardly human. Now the apostles could expect nothing during life, but what mankind usually dread, namely, poverty, exile, torments, death itself, and infamy after death. Nor is it at all likely, that they would have con-

sented to endure so many evils for the sake of a lie. For a man to suffer for error, which he believes to be truth, is not strange; but for a man to suffer for error, knowing it to be error, is hardly credible. It is also incredible, that not one of them, or of their disciples, should have confessed the imposture before their judges in the prospect of death. It is incredible that so many holy precepts should have been given by men so wicked, if they had been really impostors. It is still more incredible, that they should have willingly died for Christ, who, if he had not risen, must have wofully deceived them. Nor must we omit the miracles which these same apostles wrought to confirm their doctrine. Moreover, if the apostles had wished to deceive, they would have accommodated themselves to the temper of the people whom they addressed; they would have used "enticing words," and carefully avoided whatever might prejudice those with whom they had to deal. Yet the apostles did not at all act in this manner. They spoke things contrary to the carnal taste; they inveighed against the depraved habits of mankind; they boldly assailed the traditions of the Jews and the religion of the heathens; they would not allow the gospel to be mixed up with Jewish ceremonies; they did not aim at any smoothness and elegance of words, but adopted the most simple style of speaking. Who can imagine that such men wished to deceive us? Finally, be it observed, that the apostles *could not* have deceived, even had they wished it, since they relate those things of which there must have been innumerable witnesses. Let this be enough to prove that the first mark or character of divinity truly applies to the books of the sacred writers.

The *second* character of divinity, namely, *to reveal those mysteries which cannot proceed from the human mind, though in perfect harmony with natural ideas,* peculiarly belongs to the books of both Testaments. For they teach mysteries which never could have been discovered by human, or angelic reason, as those of the Trinity, the incarnation and satisfaction of Christ, the resurrection of the dead; which mysteries, although they exceed the comprehension of human reason, yet are in perfect harmony with it; since the mystery of a plurality of persons in one essence is necessarily connected with the work of our redemption through the incarnation of an infinite person. This work of redemption is closely connected with the necessity of a satisfac-

tion to divine justice, which reason acknowledged; therefore all nations offered sacrifices. The necessity of satisfaction agrees with the universal corruption of mankind, of which all are sensible, and which reason cannot deny. To which it may be added, that these books are the original source from which all these mysteries are derived, so that no one can assert that they are found *originally* in any human book.

The *third* character of divinity, namely, *to direct our thoughts and our worship wholly to the glory of the true God*, cannot be denied to the sacred books; for what other tendency have their instructions, than to make us lay aside all idolatry, superstition, and self-confidence, and worship God alone, trust in him, love, worship, and serve him, with the deepest humility, be wholly dependent on him, be resigned to his will, and refer ourselves, and every thing belonging to us, to his glory?

The *fourth* character is, *so to instruct the mind, as to set at rest the most insatiable desire after knowledge.* How exactly this mark distinguishes the sacred books, will plainly appear from considering the truths they lay down. They teach us the origin of the world and its creatures, the nature and works of God, his attributes and providence, his counsels and decrees (as far as it concerns us to know them), the origin and extent of human misery, the adequate remedy for it, the true way to happiness, the state of the soul after death, and other subjects of this kind. What is there, we ask, necessary to be known, which we cannot find in these books?

The *fifth* character is derived from the *holiness of the precepts*, and is also clearly discernible in these books; for they prescribe duties towards God and man of the most sacred kind, such as far surpass any thing to be found in the laws, precepts, or sayings, of any lawgiver or philosopher. For what can be of a holier character, than to enjoin upon men to deny themselves, and devote themselves wholly to God, to cut out the very root of their vices, and to abstain from every carnal lust, from "all appearance of evil." Mere men would never have thought of forbidding *inward* lust; for Paul confesses that he should never have known it to be sin, had not the law forbidden it. From this *fifth* mark, it is very plain that the devil cannot be the author of these books. His craft and cunning do not suffer him to forge books contrary, and even destructive to the genius of his king-

dom; he prefers having subjects who resemble him, and not those who are enemies to him.

The *sixth* character, namely, *to be always consistent, and to exhibit no contradictions*, will equally apply to these books; for although so many of them were written by authors in different ages, yet is there a wonderful agreement among them,—an invincible proof, that the same Spirit is the author of all these books.

The *seventh* character is *to teach those things which calm all the passions of the soul, and fill it with peace and joy*, &c. No one will hesitate to acknowledge this mark in the sacred books, if he only consider that they reveal the method of appeasing the wrath of God, of pleasing him, and of obtaining from him eternal life; and that they comfort us under every thing which disturbs, torments, and perplexes the human mind, whether the troubles of life, the fear of death, or the consciousness of guilt. To this *seventh* mark we may add another, namely, the influence of these books in the conversion of men; for they make so deep an impression on their minds, that, however deeply the seeds of wickedness take root in them, they are so greatly changed, as to hate sin, and practise holiness. Thus Paul declares (1 Thess. ii. 13.) that "the word of God *effectually worketh* in those that believe." And for this reason it is compared by the sacred writers to fire, to a hammer, to a two-edged sword, and to seed. Jer. xxiii. 29. Heb. iv. 12. 1 Pet. i. 23. Thus also justly observes Lactantius: *What they* (that is, the philosophers) *thought must be done at the call of nature, but yet could neither do themselves, nor ever saw done by any philosophers, is alone accomplished by this heavenly doctrine, which alone is wisdom*, &c. *Give me a man, who is angry, slanderous, licentious, and, by a very few words of God, I will make him as quiet as a lamb*, &c.

The *eighth* and last character is, *to predict events, which no mortal could foreknow, and which were fulfilled in due time.* This character shines forth in these books: for who does not know the predictions concerning the possession of Canaan by the Israelites, the Babylonish captivity, the four monarchies, the birth, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ, the calling of the Gentiles, the outpouring of the Spirit, the destruction of Jerusalem, and numberless other events, which could have been predicted by God only?

The above proofs of the divinity of the scriptures receive additional strength, *first*, from the wonderful pre-

servation of them up to the present time, notwithstanding the rage of their most powerful enemies, who aimed at their destruction. The books of the Egyptian mysteries, of the Druidical ceremonies, and the Sybilline verses, with innumerable other records, have been entirely lost; the Scripture alone has been preserved: nor has the infatuated rage of Antiochus, or the fury of Decius and Dioclesian, or the versatile impiety of Julian, or the virulent writings of Porphyry, Lucian, or Celsus, been able to destroy it. *Secondly*, from the majesty and simplicity of their style, which are everywhere conspicuous—in their narratives, exhortations, threatenings, promises, and even in their very controversies. It would be acting very foolishly to cavil at the simple and unadorned style of the sacred books, which contain many expressions not so pure and elegant, and such as would be accounted solecisms by the grammarians. For the Spirit of God, as one elegantly observes, *passes by, as beneath him, the petty laws of grammarians, and will not allow himself to be tied down to the rules of art.* *Thirdly*, from the number of martyrs who have sealed the truth with their blood, whose patience cannot be ascribed to a gloomy resolution, or to any barbarous custom, like that of those who throw themselves headlong down at the sound of instruments, or to the desire of glory, but to the divine help; and therefore their constancy was united with the greatest piety, meekness, humility, and other virtues. *Lastly*, the truth of the Scripture is confirmed from the extraordinary propagation of the Christian faith through the world, by the instrumentality of mean and ignorant men, free from all suspicion of falsehood, unfurnished with any powers of Greek or Roman eloquence, using persuasion only, without any advantages of power, or assistance from arms, in the midst of danger and death, and in opposition to the very gates of hell. To all this we must add, that the above marks or characters are never found united in any other books than the Scriptures, and therefore are sufficient to convince the gainsayers. In this view of the divinity of the Scripture we are confirmed by the testimony of the Scripture itself, which declares that it is "given by inspiration of God." (2 Tim iii. 16.)

Thus far we have proved the Scripture to be divine from the various marks of divinity which it bears; yet we must not imagine that even these marks can be clearly understood, without the aid of Him who im-

pressed them on the Scripture, and who is the author of the Scripture, viz. the Holy Spirit, of whose nature and operations we shall treat hereafter. If indeed the understanding of man were clear as when he was first created by God, or if he were as sharp-sighted in divine, as he is in human things, the simple examination of those marks, and the simple reading of the Scripture, would be sufficient to convince him that it is divine: but man is so blind in spiritual matters, and labours under so many preconceived notions, that, as Augustine observes, *it is necessary for his eyesight to be cured, before he can behold the Sun of righteousness;* as it is not enough for a blind man, that the sun darts his beams over the world, if his organ of sight be not restored. Hence it is, that there are so many who have not been persuaded of the divinity of the Scriptures by these marks, though so often placed before their eyes. Now in what manner the Spirit persuades us of the divinity of the Scripture, will be shown, after we have treated of the nature and operations of the Spirit. Thus much we may observe for the present, that the Spirit does not effect this through any voice of which we can hear the sound, as if he should say, *This book is divine.* For there is no Christian who can boast of having heard any such voice; and if such a thing should happen, it might be doubted, whether it proceeded from God, or from an angel of darkness transforming himself into an angel of light, or from some other cause. Nor does the Spirit persuade us by proposing any new reasons, for this idea savours of enthusiasm: but by rendering us attentive, and diverting from us all other objects which distract the mind; so that attentively contemplating these marks of divinity, we are persuaded from them that the Scripture is divine. The Spirit also performs this work by allaying the passions, and subjugating the motions of the flesh, by filling our souls with the greatest delight, while engaged in reading the word, and by doing other things, the secret of which it is not strange that we should be ignorant of, since the dealings of God with us are inscrutable. In this manner we believe that the Spirit enlightens, convinces, and converts; thus we may conceive how so many thousands of men were converted to Christ in the first ages of the gospel.

This Spirit is not given to all, as we well know; nor have all those to whom it is given, an equal measure of it granted to them. Hence it is, that not all the sacred

books have at all times been equally received by Christians as canonical, for certain books have been rejected by some, which have been received by others. Still there is no true believer who does not receive such a measure of the Spirit as enables him to understand what is necessary to salvation. And here it is to be remarked, that many persons, who, by the aid of the Spirit, perceive the scriptures to be divine, yet cannot clearly express the marks of their divinity. Divine truth, with its peculiar light and excellence, so powerfully affects the spiritual senses of many, as not to suffer them to remain in ignorance of it, and produces an assurance quite sufficient to tranquillize the conscience. In other words, when a man perceives that he finds in scripture every thing, which can satisfy the lawful desires of his soul, and contribute to his happiness, he immediately feels and acknowledges the scripture to be divine, though he may not be able to describe clearly the reasons for so doing. The case of such Christians is the same as that of a rustic, who is forced into admiration at the sight of an exquisitely beautiful picture, though he cannot tell the cause of such admiration; or of a man, who, listening to an harmonious concert of voices, feels the greatest pleasure, though he cannot clearly describe the cause of it. We need only add one remark, viz. that the testimony of the Holy Spirit tends to the confirmation of every individual believer, but cannot be made use of for the conviction and conversion of others; for it is experienced only by the faithful, in whom the Spirit dwells; and therefore he would be acting ridiculously, who should think to persuade others that the scripture is divine, because he himself has been taught this by the Holy Spirit.

CHAPTER VII.

OF THE INSPIRATION OF THE SCRIPTURES.

From what has been said concerning the *divinity* of the scriptures, it will abundantly appear, what we ought to say of their *inspiration*. No one will deny this, who attends to the following arguments. The sacred books

contain a great number of prophecies, which could not have proceeded from the prophets, or the apostles, had they not been influenced by the Holy Spirit. In these books many things are recorded, which, although they were past at the time they were written, no one could have known, had not the omniscient God condescended to reveal them. These books also teach many things too sublime, and too far exceeding human comprehensions, to have been the fictions of the most subtle genius, much less of unlettered apostles. These books also were written for the purpose of being a perpetual rule of faith and practice, which they could not be, if the apostles had written any thing without the influence, or, at least, without the direction, of the Holy Spirit, and if they had committed any error in their writing. Moreover it is to the last degree improbable, that Galilean fishermen, or publicans, wrote so many excellent things without the guidance of the Spirit. Christ also promised to the apostles the Holy Spirit, to "guide them into all truth," (John xvi. 13,) and it would be impious to say, that the Saviour of men did not perform his promises. Once more; the apostles themselves, whom no sane person will call impostors, declared that they preached and wrote under the influence of the Holy Ghost. "We thank God without ceasing, because when ye received the word, which ye heard of us, ye received it, *not* as the *word of men*, but, as it is in truth, the *word of God*." (1 Thess. ii. 13.) "Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God, which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth." (1 Cor. ii. 12, 13.) "Who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ." (1 Cor. ii. 16.) "If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge, that the things I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord." (1 Cor. xiv. 37.) On this last passage we must observe, that there were at that time men, who had the gift of discerning spirits. Now Paul subjects himself to their examination. Add (1 Cor. vii. 40.) "I think, also, that I have the Spirit of God;" where we must take notice that this is said in the same chapter, in which the apostle had said, that *he* had taught something, *not the Lord*, (verse 12,) meaning, that on

this particular subject Christ had not expressly laid down any thing before his ascension to heaven.

But that the whole subject may be properly understood, several things are to be noticed. *First*, it is not necessary to suppose, that the Holy Spirit *always* dictated to the prophets and apostles every *word* which they used. Nevertheless those holy men wrote very many things under the immediate suggestion of the Spirit, such as prophecies. Hence Paul says, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly;" (1 Tim. iv. 1,) and many other things. Again: they wrote some things in which there was no need of the Spirit's suggestion; such as those things with which they were already acquainted, which they had seen and heard, or those which related to their own private affairs. Yet they wrote nothing without the Spirit either inspiring them, or influencing them to write, or directing them, so as not to suffer them, while writing, to commit even the least error or mistake. Hence it ought not to appear strange to us, if we hear the apostles drawing conclusions from what they had either seen or heard by revelation; as when Peter, after what he had heard from Cornelius, and learned from the vision of the sheet, thus expressed himself, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons;" (Acts x. 34.) which conclusions, however, they did not draw except under the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit, which prevented them from erring. Neither is it strange, if we see in the sacred books forms of expression merely human: for although we may say that the Holy Spirit uses such forms from mere condescension to us, yet perhaps he allowed the apostles to adopt their customary style of speaking.

From what has been advanced, we cannot draw the inferences which follow: *first*, that the apostles knew all things as soon as they were baptized with the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost; we do not imagine this; hence it is not strange, if Peter, before Cornelius's baptism, did not know of the calling of the Gentiles; for the Spirit increased the knowledge of the apostles as the circumstances of the times, and the improvement of the church, required. *Secondly*, that the apostles were entirely free from sin; for this was not needful, but it was altogether needful that they should not fall into the least error in that doctrine, which was to be the rule of faith and practice. Therefore it is not strange that Peter should do any thing deserving Paul's censure, as in the

matter of his unseasonable compliance, out of regard to the Jews. (Gal. ii.) *Thirdly*, that the Holy Spirit revealed to the apostles whatever they might wish to know, though it were not necessary to be known; hence it is no wonder, that, in their relation of some historical facts, they do not accurately show the time in which they took place, but say that such an event occurred *about* such a time; thus Luke (iii. 23) observes that Jesus, when he was baptized, was "*about* thirty years of age."

CHAPTER VIII.

OF THE AUTHORITY OF THE SCRIPTURES.

Having proved the divinity and inspiration of the scripture, we next consider its *authority*. Now this is nothing else but the dignity and right of the sacred books, whereby they claim our faith in whatever they hold forth as necessary to be believed, and our obedience in whatever they prescribe to be done, or to be left undone. For having been proved to be of God, and not of men, or of the devil, the necessary consequence is, that they have supreme authority over us. For who would deny that to be authoritative which is divine? Now the scripture derives its authority from God only, who is the author of it. If then I am asked on what ground I believe the scripture to be divine, I can only reply, "Because of the marks and characters which I behold in it, and by which it proves itself to be of God, and not because of any other testimony." As if any one should ask me why I believe the sun to be bright, or sugar sweet, or the rose fragrant, I should reply, Because I see the sun's rays, I taste the sweetness of sugar, and I smell the fragrance of the rose. We must reason concerning the scripture, which is the first principle of faith, in the same way as concerning the principles of other sciences, which do not derive their authority from any other source, but are known of themselves, and prove their own truth. The same may be said of God's word, which is the law and edict of our heavenly Sovereign,

as is said of human laws, which do not derive their authority from the subjects on whom they are imposed, or from those who have the charge of announcing them to the people, but only from the sovereign, who enacted them. But, lest any one should say that the scripture does indeed possess authority in itself, as proceeding from God, but does not obtain that authority in relation to us, except through the testimony of the church, we shall prove that the scripture does not derive its authority from the church,* by the following arguments: *first*, if this be the case, divine authority will be subject to human, and we shall believe God merely on the testimony of man; but this would be absurd; therefore it is absurd to say that the testimony of the church gives authority to the scripture. Now we know that the testimony of the church is but the testimony of man, for it consists of mere men, who are not divinely inspired. *Secondly*, if the authority of scripture be suspended on the testimony of the church, then it will be only a human faith, by which we believe the divinity of the scripture; the latter idea is absurd, therefore the former is absurd also. Now the testimony of the church can produce only a human faith, because that only is divine faith which rests on divine authority, whereas the authority of the church is merely human, unless it can be proved to be under the infallible guidance of the Holy Spirit, which cannot be proved of any church since the times of the apostles, who alone, together with the prophets, were exempt from error. And to believe only with a human faith that the scripture is divine is absurd, because then there would be nothing certain in religion, and nothing on which the mind could securely depend without any doubt. *Thirdly*, if the judgment of the church does already suppose the divine authority of scripture, then the authority of the latter will not depend on the former. Now the church is persuaded of the divinity of scripture, either *with* or *without* grounds. The latter idea is absurd even to think of; if then the former is correct, there could be no other grounds than the marks of divinity which appear in the scriptures, and which thereby gain them authority with the church; thus the authority of scripture is at once recognized to

* The writer here attacks the opinion of the Papists, who maintain that the authority of the scripture over us depends on the testimony of the church.

be prior and superior to the judgment of the church. *Fourthly*, if the authority of the church depends on the scripture itself, then it is absurd to make the authority of the latter depend upon the former. Now it is clear that no other church can be acknowledged as the true church, but that which is "built upon the foundation of the prophets and apostles," (Eph. ii. 20,) *i. e.* upon the *scripture*. Nor can it be ascertained that any church is a true church, except first of all it be proved, that that is divine and true which the church holds to be such, since it is the belief of the truth to which the church owes its existence as a church. Now, we cannot know whether that be true which the church receives as true, except by weighing it in the balances of the scripture. Moreover it will be evident, that the authority of the church is subject to the authority of scripture, if we consider that the authority of the apostles themselves was by them subjected to that of the scripture, and surely the authority of the church in any age cannot be greater than that of the apostles. But that these holy men did subject their authority to that of God's word, is clear from the words of Peter, declaring that the "word of prophecy" (that is the *scriptures* of the Old Testament) is "surer" than the testimony of the apostles, who were "eye witnesses of Christ's majesty," and heard the voice from heaven. (2 Pet. i. 16—20.) And also from the words of Paul, "though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." (Gal. i. 8.)

To all this we may add, that there is no church which has such clear evidences of its own authority, as the scripture has of its own divinity, and common sense teaches us that no authority of any councils, or of any men, can be equal to that of God speaking in his word, or be put in competition with the writings of Moses, of the prophets, and the apostles. From all these arguments it is plain, that the authority of the sacred books is not to be suspended on the testimony of the church.

We must not, however, imagine that this testimony is of no use at all; on the contrary, we believe it has no small weight in influencing the minds of men. The office of the church in respect to the scripture includes many duties. We maintain that it is the business of the church to preserve this divine Testament with the strictest fidelity, like a notary, with whom are deposited the writings of any contract or agreement; to point out the

sacred books, and to lead men, as it were, to them, as John the Baptist pointed out Christ to the Jews; to open the true and genuine sense of scripture, and to interpret it; to distinguish fictitious and spurious from the sacred and genuine writings, the canonical from the apocryphal books; to vindicate the word from the cavils and corruptions of its adversaries; to proclaim, like a herald, the doctrine contained in it. For these reasons the church is called "the pillar and the ground of the truth," (1 Tim. iii. 15;) not indeed because the *truth* derives its authority from the church, but because the church proclaims the truth, exhibits it to the world, preserves it pure and uncorrupt, and defends it against the accusations of Satan and the world. For if there were no church, and no godly pastors who by their preaching rescued the truth from obscurity and oblivion, errors, impostures, superstitions, and corruptions, of every kind, would immediately prevail. Now in the above passage there may be an allusion to the *pillars* or "scaffolds" (2 Chron. vi. 13) on which kings were accustomed to sit, when they performed any act of solemnity; which pillars supported the kings, and shewed them forth to the people, but did not give any additional authority to them. According to this allusion, Paul may represent the *truth* as a queen, sitting on the *church* as upon a throne or pillar, so that she may be seen by all. Or there is an allusion to those pillars before the halls or courts of justice, on which the laws and decrees of magistrates were hung up, and to which programmes or edicts were affixed, so that they might become known to all men. Thus Demosthenes relates, that in a very ancient temple of Bacchus, near a stone altar, there was a pillar, on which was written out a certain law concerning the king's marriage; and, according to Athenæus, upon a pillar in the temple of Hercules was suspended a certain decree of Alcibiades. Thus Paul terms the church the *pillar* of the truth, because the truth being as it were hung upon it, is made known to all. *Lastly*, the allusion may be to those pillars among the heathen, in which the images of their deities were seen, their oracles inscribed, and near which their statues were placed. Thus the apostle might intend to oppose to these pillars of falsehood, error, and fable, the true church, which exhibits not the images of false gods, but the true and most lively image of the true "God manifest in the flesh;" in which are set forth no fables, but the "great mystery of godliness," and on

which are read no ambiguous oracles of Apollo, but the most certain oracles of the living God. And here we may remark, that those who excelled others in sanctity of life, and clearness of doctrine, were called by the ancient fathers, *pillars, and foundations of the truth;* thus Chrysostom calls the apostles, *towers and pillars*, and Ignatius, the *pillars of the world.*

From what has been said therefore, it is plain that the church has indeed various duties to perform in regard to the scripture, but that the authority of the latter does not at all depend upon the former; for whatever the church does in relation to the word, goes no farther, than that we may be said to believe *by means of*, but not *because* of the church, as it was by means of the Samaritan woman, that her fellow-citizens believed Christ. For the church performs for us the same service, as that woman performed to her countrymen; for as she conducted the Samaritans to Jesus, and they, having become acquainted with him, received him on account of himself, not on account of the Samaritan woman, as they themselves declare, (John iv. 42,) so the church conducts us to the scripture, and puts it into our hands, but as long as we stop here, our faith is merely human, or rather a step towards faith, than faith itself, until we examine into the scripture, and embrace it for its own sake. *Let us follow those*, says Augustine, *who first invite us to believe what we are not yet able to understand, in order that, having been enabled by faith itself, we may come to understand what we believe, when it is no longer men, but God himself who inwardly illuminates and strengthens our minds.* If indeed the church should add to, or take away from, or make any change whatever in, the commandments which she hath received from the Lord, her sin would be as great, as that of a notary who should fraudulently alter a will, or of a herald who should proclaim a fictitious edict, or of a governor who should forge a royal sign-manual. Several other observations we must defer till we come to treat of the church. I will only add a saying of Innocent III. the Roman pontiff, *The judgment of God is always founded upon the truth, which neither deceives, nor is deceived; but the judgment of the church sometimes follows opinion, which is often found to deceive and to be deceived.*

CHAPTER IX.

OF THE PERFECTION OF THE SCRIPTURES.

We must now proceed to show that the scripture contains all things necessary to salvation, consequently, that it must be *perfect.* Now this is proved by the following arguments. *First*, that must be perfect which reveals every thing that can make us wise unto salvation, and furnish the pastors of the church completely for their office; now this the scripture does, as Paul testifies, (2 Tim. iii. 15, 16,) who, addressing Timothy, who had known the holy scriptures from a child, declares that they "are able to make us wise unto salvation," and then adds, "all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." Here the scripture is declared to be profitable not only for some things, but for all things, for *instruction* in the truth, *conviction* of error, *correction* of evil, and *direction* in what is good; it is pronounced able to make the man or minister of God perfect, and completely furnished for every part of his office, and every man wise unto salvation. *Secondly*, that must be perfect, to which nothing must be added, and from which nothing must be taken away: now God declares concerning his word, "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish aught from it." (Deut. iv. 2, and xii. 32.) From this passage the argument is still more powerful, because the question is only concerning the law, and the books of Moses; and therefore, if God at that time desired the people to be content with the rule which he had given them, as being a sufficiently plain revelation according to that age of the church, must we not believe the present scripture to be perfect, since it hath pleased God to reveal his will more fully and clearly by the prophets and the apostles? And is it not the height of presumption to add to or diminish from it? They who do so may justly be afraid of the curse denounced by John upon him, who "adds unto" or "takes away from, the

words of the book," (Rev. xxii. 18, 19,) at least they can not escape the divine reproof, "Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar," (Prov. xxx. 6.) The apostle Paul also confirms this argument, by pronouncing a curse upon those, even if they were angels, who should "preach any other gospel than that which he had preached." (Gal. i. 8.) But the force of the whole argument will be better understood by observing, that the prophets and apostles taught every thing necessary to salvation, and declared "all the counsel of God," (Acts xx. 20, 27,) and that they committed to writing all those things necessary to salvation, which they preached, as is proved from the circumstance of their pronouncing accursed those who should dare to preach any other thing than what they themselves were preaching, which they would not have ventured to do, if they had not committed their preaching to writing; since otherwise it could not be clearly ascertained, whether that which others preached were really contrary to the apostolic preaching. The apostles moreover declare that they write for this end, that men might believe, and by faith obtain eternal life, (John xx. 31. 1 John v. 13.) Now if they had not written all things that were necessary for salvation, they could not have brought men thereby to eternal life. Nor is it likely that the apostles omitted necessary things, since they committed to writing so many things which were not necessary, and that for the purpose of more fully instructing us. The *third* argument for the perfection of the scripture is this: if it were imperfect, it would be so, either because God was unwilling that all things necessary to salvation should be written, or because the apostles were unwilling to write them, although God had commanded them. The latter idea no one will assert; the former cannot be maintained; for no reason can be adduced, why God should have wished only a part of the things needful to salvation to be written, and the other part to be left to the uncertain tradition of men.

Let these arguments be sufficient, and every one who attentively reads the scripture will be abundantly convinced, that it contains all those things which can produce faith, hope, and obedience, and consequently, which are necessary to salvation. But here we must attend to the following considerations. There are some things necessary to salvation which are naturally known to

all, as the existence of God, the immortality of the soul, &c., it is not necessary that these truths should be professedly taught in the scriptures. They must be taken for granted, and not proved, although they are found and confirmed in scripture; because, though they ought to be known to us by nature, yet we must confess that some of them are obscure, and appear doubtful to some persons. Again, all things necessary to salvation are not taught in scripture in express words, nor was it needful; but some are expressly laid down, others are deduced by fair and legitimate inferences. Neither is it necessary, that scripture should contain expressly the refutation of all heresies; for as *right* is an index both of itself, and of *wrong*, errors are easily refuted from the establishment of the truth. Further, the perfection of Scripture has not been always the same with respect to its degree, for revelation increased according to the different ages of the church, not in regard to the substance of the truth, but in regard to the clearer manifestation of them. Moreover, the perfection of Scripture by no means excludes the ministry of the church, or the work of the Holy Spirit in conversion; for whatever pastors teach by word of mouth, is *substantially* drawn from scripture, and the work of the Spirit is nothing but the impression on our hearts of the doctrine delivered in the scripture. A rule is not the less perfect, because the hand is required to apply it. This perfection also is confined to those things which are necessary to salvation, for it was not God's design, in giving us the scriptures, to make us philosophers, or mathematicians, or physicians, &c. *Lastly*, among the things necessary to salvation, we are not to reckon every single thing which may, in some way or other, be connected with religion, and every thing which has been said or done by Christ and the inspired writers. For it cannot be denied, that many things were done and said by the Lord Jesus while on earth, which are not recorded in scripture or in any other book, and that there are many means or helps to religion, which relate to ecclesiastical ceremonies, and which are left to the prudence of ecclesiastical rulers.

This perfection of the scripture is clearly recognized by the fathers. The words of Tertullian are very plain, *Since Christ*, he says, *we have no need of curiosity, nor since the gospel, of inquiry: when we believe, we want nothing more to believe; for we believe this first, viz. that there is nothing more which we ought to believe.* He

says, in another place, against Hermogenes, *Let Hermogenes and his school show us that* "IT IS WRITTEN;" *if it is not written, let him fear that wo denounced on those who add to, or take from the book.* To the same effect speak Cyprian, Basil, Chrysostom, Jerome, Augustine, and others. I will only subjoin a remark of Thomas Aquinas, *We must not believe the successors of the apostles, except as far as they declare to us those things which the latter have left behind them in their writings.*

It may now be inquired, whether no place be left for *tradition*, since the scripture is perfect? To understand this question rightly, the meaning of the word must be explained. Now it is sometimes taken for any doctrine which is communicated, either by word, or by writing, as when Paul says to the Thessalonians, "Hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle," (2 Thess. ii. 15.) Sometimes it means that doctrine which is taught by word of mouth, though it is afterwards committed to writing, as Paul says to the Corinthians, "I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you." (1 Cor. xi. 23.) For the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, of which it is here treated, which Paul had taught by word of mouth, was afterwards committed by him to writing. The word is also taken for any doctrine not written; thus Christ (Matt. xv. 3,) asks the Jews, "Why do ye transgress the commandment of God through your tradition?"

And here it will not be amiss to observe, that the Jews boasted much of their traditions, and placed the oral on an equal footing with the written law, maintaining that both were given to God by Moses. Moreover some of them carry their regard for traditions to such a length, that they not only brand those who adhere to the scriptures only, with the name of *Karaite* heretics, but even are not ashamed to assert, that *to study the sacred books is to lose time.* Let it be further observed, that some traditions are *doctrinal*, that is, relating to faith or to manners; others are *historical* and *ritual*, *i. e.* relating to rites and ceremonies.

Having thus far premised, we must observe that we are not to reject every thing which goes by the name of tradition; otherwise the scriptures must be rejected, which are sometimes called traditions. We are not to condemn every thing which is taught by word of mouth, for the very contents of the scriptures were first proclaimed, and are to this day proclaimed, by word of

mouth. Nor are we to reject all ritual and historical traditions concerning facts, or concerning ceremonies, which may or may not be observed. Traditions may be of some use, both for the illustration of scriptural passages, and for the defence of the truth, provided they be subjected to the authority of scripture, and be reckoned amongst things merely human. Finally, there is no need to have recourse to doctrinal traditions, and to draw from them the truths which are necessary to salvation, as if the latter were not contained in scripture; much less to imagine that traditions are to be received with the same regard and reverence as the scriptures. The truth of the last assertion (for the rest need not either proof or explanation) depends on several arguments. First, if every thing necessary and essential to religious faith and practice is contained in scripture, then there is no need to have recourse to traditions: but the former is true, as proved in the preceding chapter, therefore also the latter. Clement of Alexandria ascribes to Peter this saying, *Nothing without the scripture. Who speaks*, says Ambrose, *when the scriptures are silent?* Again, God himself condemns all doctrinal traditions which are independent of the scripture (Isa. xxix. 13; Matt. xv. 3, 9); not those only which are contrary to the faith, but all those which are burdensome to the conscience, such as the washing of hands before meat, practised by the Pharisees. Further, the Christian faith ought to depend on an authority not liable to error, otherwise our faith would not be divine. But if it rested on traditions, it would not rest on an authority free from error; for no one can be sure whether the tradition which is set forth, and which is not read in scripture, derives its origin from Christ or his apostles, especially as many things are set forth under the name of traditions, which contradict each other. Thus the churches of Asia boasted of their tradition concerning the celebration of Easter on the fourteenth day of the moon; and Polycrates and Polycarp declared they had this tradition from John; but the other churches were of a contrary opinion, and affirmed that they had this tradition from other apostles. Which side is to be believed? Oral tradition is indeed uncertain, and by no means a safe guardian of truth; and the same may be said of it as of Fame—

Tam ficti pravique tenax, quàm nuntia veri.*

For this reason, some have not inaptly compared the scripture to a sun-dial; for as this, being itself fixed and immovable, points out the hour by its shadow, so the scripture is an unchangeable rule: whereas they have compared tradition to the hand of a watch, which being always moving and turning round, points out the hour only by the motion and turning of its point.

CHAPTER X.

OF THE PERSPICUITY OF THE SCRIPTURES.

The scripture not only contains all things necessary to salvation, but also contains them in so clear and perspicuous a form, that they may be discovered and known by any man, whose eyes have not been blinded by "the god of this world." The plainness of the scriptures is proved by various arguments. First, the scripture itself, in many passages, bears testimony to its own plainness, both in regard to the law and to the gospel. "This commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven? &c.; but the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth and in thine heart." (Deut. xxx. 11—15.) "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." (Psalm cxix. 105.) "We have a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place." (2 Peter i. 19.) Again, the scripture would have been given in vain, if it were obscure; for it was given for our instruction, and as a rule of faith, as Paul observes, (Rom. xv. 4.) "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning." But how could the word teach us, if it either surpassed or equalled the oracles of Apollo in obscurity? And how could its decisions, if obscure, be the rule of faith and manners? Once more; either God *could not* reveal himself more

* 'Things done relates, not done she feigns, and mingles truth with lies.'—*Dryden.*

plainly to men, or he *would not.* No one will assert the former, and the latter is most absurd; for who could believe that God our heavenly Father has been unwilling to reveal his will to his children, when it was necessary to do so, in order that men might more easily obey it? Although another argument is derived from examining the contents of scripture, and seeing how clearly they lay down what is necessary to salvation. For what can be clearer than those things which are contained in the decalogue, and which Christ reduces to two heads? (Matt. xxii.) And who will deny that the doctrines in the Apostles' Creed are clearly inculcated, taught, and explained, through the whole scripture?

But here we must make several observations. 1. We allow that some things are obscure, and "hard to be understood," not only in Paul's Epistles, as Peter declares, but also in other books. It has pleased God that such should be the case, to stir up and increase the diligence of the faithful, to check the pride of others, and to remove any disdain which might arise from too great a facility of understanding the word (since the human mind is in the habit of despising and slighting what is common and attainable by all); but we deny that such things are among those that are necessary to salvation. And even if some of them are among these, we maintain that they are explained in other parts of the word. *The scripture*, says Gregory, *brings forward publicly what may nourish the weak, and also lays up in private what may charm the minds of the strong; it is, as it were, a river both shallow and deep, in which both a lamb may wade, and an elephant may swim.* In scripture, as in nature, there are three sorts of things; some are plain to all, some are known only to the learned, others not even to the learned themselves. 2. We readily allow that there are mysteries in scripture which surpass our comprehension, and which we shall not perfectly understand even in heaven. At the same time, we maintain, that we have as much of these mysteries taught us, as is useful and necessary to be known. For instance, we do not comprehend the mysteries of the Incarnation and the Trinity—that is, how it can be, that there are three persons in one essence, and how God assumed human nature: but though the manner is unknown, the thing itself is plainly taught; which is all that is necessary to salvation. 3. While we believe that the scriptures are plain in things necessary, we confess

that these things are not clearly taught in *every* passage; but there is nothing in the darker passages which is not found elsewhere very plainly laid down. 4. We observe, that the scripture is plain, not to all persons alike, and to those who read and hear it with any kind of disposition whatever; but only to those who are teachable (provided they are in possession of their reason, and implore the light of divine grace), and who are not negligent and slothful, and who are neither blinded by preconceived opinions, nor carried away by their passions, nor perverted by wilful sin; for all these dispositions are great hindrances to the understanding of the scriptures. 5. We remark, that the writings of the Old are less clear than those of the New Testament; for the former was clouded with various types, figures, and shadows, but yet was quite clear enough in whatever was needful to be known by the ancient saints. 6. We do not deny that we shall know divine things far more clearly in heaven; for there we shall no longer "see through a glass darkly, but face to face," as the scripture teaches. Still we say, that those divine things are abundantly unfolded to us on earth, and therefore, although it is "through a glass," yet "with open face we behold the glory of the Lord," as Paul declares, (2 Cor. iii. 18.) We plead for such a perspicuity of the scriptures, as does not exclude either attention of mind, or the necessary assistance of God (hence David prays for his eyes to be opened to "see wondrous things out of the law,") or the teaching and ministry of the church, or the reading of commentaries. The only obscurity which we explode, is that which would drive mankind from the pure fountains of scripture, and compel them to have recourse to the impure streams of human tradition.

As to the manner of interpreting or finding the sense of the scriptures, we may remark, that there is only one meaning or sense of scripture; for truth has but one, and does not admit several senses; otherwise it would be ambiguous and uncertain. At the same time, we believe that the Holy Ghost has been pleased sometimes, under one and the same expression, to signify several things together, yet subordinate to each other, so that one thing may be the sign and type of another, or may at least have some connexion with it. Thus the precept concerning the "not breaking of the bones of the lamb," (Exod. xii,) had a reference first to the paschal lamb, and afterwards to Christ, (John xix. 36.) So, the

promise given to Abraham concerning "his seed," regarded Isaac in the type, and Christ in the antitype. These do not constitute two senses, but two parts of one and the same sense intended by the Holy Spirit. The first is called, by some divines, *the literal sense*, as being that which the words primarily and immediately convey; the second they call *the mystical sense*, or that which has another besides the immediate signification. But, according to other divines, the literal sense contains all which is intended by the Holy Spirit.

To find out the true sense of the scriptures, and their interpretation, the following things are necessary:—1. Frequent prayer; for the word is to be understood through the same Spirit who dictated it. 2. A mind free from preconceived opinions, and attached to the truth, and desirous of cultivating true piety. 3. The study of the original tongues, which however is not absolutely necessary to all, but to those only who have to instruct others as well as themselves, and to refute opponents. Just as in naval matters, greater skill is required in him who sails over the ocean to distant countries, than in the man who crosses a small river in a light boat. It is necessary also to compare ancient versions, to distinguish between literal and figurative expressions, to consider the general scope and design, to mark the premises and their conclusions, to compare the darker with the plainer passages, and parallel and even dissimilar passages with each other, to have a regard to the analogy of faith, and also to possess some knowledge of the customs of the Jews and other nations. We may observe also, that in the interpretation of scripture, we are not every where to seek after allegorical meanings, and that we must not hastily depart from the literal sense, but only when it is contrary to the analogy of faith, and makes a sense that is absurd.

CHAPTER XI.

THE SCRIPTURES THE ONLY RULE OF FAITH AND PRACTICE.

Thus far we have proved that the scriptures of the Old and New Testament are divinely inspired, and that they fully and clearly contain all things needful to salvation. Hence we easily infer that they are the *true and only rule of faith and practice.* Now a rule must be perfect in all its parts; not admitting either of addition or diminution. Such we have already proved the scripture to be. A rule also must be certain and unchangeable: but such is the scripture, being the truth of the unchangeable God, "that cannot lie." Human opinions are of such a nature as to be continually subject to changes: but it is not so with the doctrine of salvation, which has always been the same. The scripture, as a rule, directs our faith and conduct in such a manner, that the very least deviation from it renders us guilty of error. We cannot doubt of the scripture being a rule, if we consider that the prophets, our Saviour, and the apostles, always appeal to it. "To the law and to the testimony," says Isaiah (viii. 20). "It is written," said Christ, when contending with Satan, (Matt. iv. 4, 7, 10,) and when dealing with the Sadducees, (Matt. xxii.) The apostles did the same in their endeavours to convert the Jews: nay, so perfect a rule did they consider the scripture, that they sometimes draw an argument from its silence. "To which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son?" (Heb. i. 5,) and the Bereans are commended for examining the doctrine of the apostles by this rule, (Acts xvii. 11.) We may add that the scripture calls itself a *rule*, (Gal. vi. 16.) "As many as walk according to this rule, peace be unto them," &c.

Not only the scripture of the New, but also of the Old Testament, is the rule of our faith and practice, although we are no longer under the old dispensation, which has been evidently abolished. "For whatever things," says Paul, (Rom. xv. 4.) "have been written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the scriptures, might have hope." Both testaments contain substantially the same doctrine; they

propose the same objects of faith, and enjoin the same precepts: they are both the foundation of the church, which is said to be "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets," (Eph. ii. 20.) and Peter shows that they "do well" who "take heed to the word of prophecy." (2 Peter i. 19.) The scripture then is the only rule, nor can there be any other. *Reason* is no such rule, for it is blind, and understandeth not the things of God; (1 Cor. ii. 14, 15.) it is liable to error, and is often deceived; the mysteries of faith are beyond its sphere; the natural man cannot comprehend them. Reason is as it were the eye of the mind, but scripture is the standard, by which it measures the objects proposed. Reason is the instrument which the believer uses in examining the objects of faith by the scripture, as by the infallible rule of truth, but it is not the rule itself of these objects of faith. Yet this does not prevent us from acknowledging that reason has many uses. It is of service in vindicating the truth, against those who deny revelation altogether, or against those who, admitting revelation, endeavour to corrupt it with false interpretations; in illustrating the mysteries of religion by collecting together all that can be gleaned from the book of nature, from polite literature, from historical records, from philosophical and philological science; in drawing conclusions, and determining the truth of them; in comparing the text with the context, versions with the originals, the decisions of ecclesiastical teachers with the scripture, and in distinguishing falsehood from truth, and what is legitimate from what is spurious.

In fact, *reason* and *faith*, though of a different nature, are not opposed to each other. Hence we maintain that we must not admit any thing, even in religious matters, which is contrary to right reason. For although there is much darkness in the human mind, yet no one can deny that there remain some sparks of natural light, and that the mind has in it those principles of undoubted truth, which faith often makes use of for the confirmation of its own doctrines; but what we maintain is, that reason cannot and ought not to bring forth any mysteries, as it were, out of its own storehouse; for this is the prerogative of scripture only. Also, that reason is not to be heard when complaining of its incapacity to comprehend the mysteries of faith: for, being finite, it is no wonder that reason should not comprehend many things that relate to what is infinite; and to reject a mystery

because it is incomprehensible to reason, is to offend against reason itself. Neither is reason to be listened to whenever, under cover of holding the mysteries of faith, it aims at setting up its own errors. On the very same grounds we cannot call *philosophy* any rule of faith, although we again concede that it is of no little use, provided it assume not to itself the power of dictating in articles of faith. True philosophy indeed serves very much both to convince men and to prepare their minds; and there is a wonderful harmony between sound philosophy and divinity; for truth is not contrary to truth, nor light to light; only we must not imagine that the former is the rule by which the sense of scripture must be tried and examined.

The same observations may be applied to the testimony of the church, to the fathers, and to the decrees of councils; these form no rule of faith—1. Because these testimonies, being merely human, are liable to error. Augustine, writing to Jerome, makes these just remarks; *The books of the scriptures, which are now called canonical, are the only books to which I have learned to pay such respect and reverence, as most firmly to believe that no one of their authors committed any error in writing; whereas other books I peruse in such a manner, that, however they may be distinguished for holy instructions, I do not think any thing to be true, merely because they have so considered it, but only as far as they have been able to convince me of the truth, either by reasonable argument, or by an appeal to the canonical writers. Nor do I think, my brother, that your opinion on this subject, is different; indeed I am persuaded that you would not have your own books read in the same way as those of the prophets and apostles, whose writings, because they are free from all error, it were impious to call in question.*—2. Because these testimonies are not only liable to error, but have erred in many things; nay, often contradict themselves and each other.—3. Because the writings of the fathers have been in many ways corrupted, and it is very difficult to know what were their opinions on various subjects. It is therefore indisputable, that *the holy scriptures are the only rule of faith and practice.*

From what has been said, we may easily ascertain who is the true and supreme *Judge* of *controversies*, viz. God who speaks in the scripture. For he only can be a supreme judge in religious matters, who never errs, nor can err, in his decisions, who is influenced neither

by partiality, nor by passion, and from whom there is no appeal. But all these qualifications belong not to man; God alone can claim them, for he is truth itself, is no respecter of persons, and acknowledges no superior. To this judge the prophets and the apostles always appeal, as we have shown already; and if there had been any other, the scripture would have mentioned him somewhere, since there was nothing of which the faithful had greater need to be reminded; whereas the scripture is perfectly silent about it, as every reader may observe. But here we may remark that God, speaking in the scriptures, is called a Judge, because he hath taught in his Word such things, as, being properly understood and applied, will finally settle all controversies of faith. The scripture, therefore, is the fountain and rule of divine law, by which all controversies of faith both can and ought to be clearly determined, as in the commonwealth all decisions and judgments are founded on the law; and even the Turks, in all controversies make a final appeal to the Koran; and this was clearly perceived by the fathers of the church. Thus Optatus speaks: *Ye say, It is lawful; we say, It is not lawful; between your* lawful *and our* unlawful, *the minds of the people are divided and perplexed. Let no one believe you, let no one believe us; the arbiter must be sought from heaven; no decision on this matter can be found on earth: but why do we knock at the door of heaven, since even here below we have the gospel testament?* And Augustine says: *We are brethren; why do we strive? Our Father did not die without a will; he made a will, then died, and rose again. So long shall we strive about the inheritance, until the will be brought forward. And when the will is brought forth, all are silent, that it may be opened. The Judge listens attentively, the advocates are silent; silence is proclaimed in the court, all the people are attentive, that the words of the deceased testator may be read. He lies unconscious in the tomb; but his words have power; so Christ sits in heaven, and his testament is called in question. Open it then, let us read; we are brethren, why do we strive?*

Yet, though the scripture is our only rule of faith and practice, and God alone who speaks in it, is the supreme Judge in the church, we willingly allow another *subordinate judge*, viz. the testimony of the teachers and pastors of the church, who settle controversies by God's word, and by the same means confute the adversaries;

who explain the precepts of the divine law, and faithfully apply them to all cases which may arise. Such subordinate judges were Moses and Aaron, under the Old Testament, who were a sort of *ministerial* judges, not settling any controversies by their own authority, but from the law and commandments of God: Moses, as mediator, "bringing the causes unto God," (Exod. xviii. 19.) and Aaron, giving answers from the law, and in accordance with it. (Deut. xvii. 11.) Neither of them were free from the risk of error, for (Lev. iv. 2, 3, &c.) there is prescribed a sacrifice for any sin of the priest committed through ignorance. Such judges also were the high-priests who succeeded Aaron, who yet very often erred; hence they are reproved, (Mal. ii. 8,) because "they were departed out of the way." Such, too, are all pastors under the New Testament, both *individually*, each over his own flock, and *collectively*, when assembled in a synod or council.

But no subordinate judge can bind the conscience, unless he be found fully to agree with the scripture; and we may depart from his decision if he "preach any thing than that *which has been preached*." There is but "one lawgiver," (James iv. 12,) namely, God, and the church is only in the situation of an *ordinary judge*, who is bound by the laws, and whose decision, if contrary to the laws, is null and void, and capable of appeal. And in this case the apostolical axiom is in force, "We ought to obey God rather than men." Seeing then that the *subordinate judge* is liable to error, and does err in many things, we maintain that the right of private judgment belongs to every man, which is evident from those passages in which the faithful are commanded to try or prove all things—"Prove all things, hold fast that which is good," (1 Thess. v. 21;) "I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say," (1 Cor. x. 15;) "Beloved, believe not every spirit; but try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world." (1 John iv. 1.) The same truth is also evident from Gal. i. 8, "Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." For if private Christians were not allowed to judge of the decisions of the church, it would be impious, besides useless, to hold accursed not only the church, but Paul himself, and even the angels, should they preach another gospel. And this opinion does not in the least contradict the

saying of Peter, (2 Pet. i. 20,) that "no prophecy is of any private interpretation;" for his meaning is plain, namely, that no prophecy derives its origin from any private *impulse*, that is, the suggestion of any man's own mind, but only from the suggestion of the Holy Spirit. But even if we translate the phrase by the words *private interpretation*, the sense will be, that the prophecies are not to be explained according to our own pleasure and imagination, by having a meaning affixed to them, clearly contrary to the mind of God, but according to the revelation of the Holy Spirit, who inspired them, and revealed the true meaning of them to the apostles.

From all that has been said, we may abundantly infer the duty of *reading* the Scriptures. This obligation arises from the positive command of God, directed to all and each of mankind—"These words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thy heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up," &c. (Deut. vi. 7—9; xxxi. 11—13;) "Blessed is the man whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night," (Psalm i. 1, 2;) "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom," "whereunto ye do well that ye take heed," (Col. iii. 16; 2 Peter i. 19;) "Search the scriptures." (John v. 39.) The end also for which the Scripture was given, obliges us to read it, namely, the salvation of all men, which it could not effect, unless it were perused. All the encomiums bestowed on the Scripture, are so many arguments for the reading of it. It is the *will* or *testament* of a Father, therefore it must be read by the children; it is the *epistle* of the Creator to the creature, therefore to be perused by the latter; it is the *food of our souls*, to nourish which it must therefore be read; to which we may add, the constant practice of the Jewish and the Christian church. All the fathers exhort to this duty, and among the rest Chrysostom, who, preaching to the people, declares, *I always exhort, and will not cease to exhort you, not only to give ear to what is said from this place, but also to apply yourselves at home to the constant reading of the divine Scriptures.* And he reproves those who alleged various excuses for their neglect of this duty, such as their various occupations, and the care of their families; and who dared to assert that this duty belonged not to them, but to the monks

and hermits. We are well aware, indeed, that many abuse the reading of the Scriptures; but if any one should make this a reason for neglecting the duty, he would act like a man, who, because of the frequent abuse of meat and drink, should choose to perish for hunger and thirst.

CHAPTER XII.

OF THE TRANSLATIONS AND APOCRYPHAL BOOKS.

SINCE the duty of reading the Scriptures is evident, it follows that they must be translated into the various native languages; for that which was unintelligible would be read to no purpose. As mankind therefore speak a variety of tongues, and all are not acquainted with the Hebrew and Greek, in which the sacred books were written, it is necessary that they should be translated into languages that are known.

Hence a great many versions and paraphrases have been written by Jews and Christians. The principal, belonging to the former, are—1. The *Paraphrase* on the Pentateuch, ascribed to *Onkelos*, who is believed to have been cotemporary with Gamaliel. 2. What is commonly called the *Targum of Jonathan*, the disciple of Hillel, as he is thought to have been, and according to some, the fellow-disciple of Simeon who took the infant Saviour in his arms. 3. The *Paraphrase* of the five books of Canticles, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, and Esther. 4. The *Paraphrase* of the *Hagiographa.* 5. The *Jerusalem Targum* on the Pentateuch. There are also extant, some Syrian versions, not only of the New Testament, the version of which is the most ancient, and hence attributed to the evangelist Mark, but also of the Old Testament; there are also Arabian versions of the tenth century, and Persian, Ethiopic, and Samaritan versions. With regard to the Greek versions, they are well known; the chief of which is that which is called the *Septuagint*, or version of the LXX., made about 300 years before Christ, under Ptolemy Phi-

ladelphus. The limits of this work will not permit us to enter into the disputes of the learned, as to whether that version was made by seventy-two interpreters, or by one individual; whether all the sacred books were translated, and who it was that advised Philadelphus to adorn and enrich his library with the sacred writings.

There were also other famous versions, namely, that of *Aquila* of Pontus or Sinope, who from an excommunicated Christian became a Jew, under the emperor Adrian, about A. D. 137. That of Theodotion, an Ephesian, in the beginning of the emperor Commodus' reign, A. D. 184, who from a Marcionite heretic became a Jewish proselyte, or a Judaizing Ebionite. That of *Symmachus*, a Samaritan, who was either before Theodotion, or under Severus, about A. D. 193. That of *Jericho*, found in a cask in that city, A. D. 220; the author is uncertain. The *Nicopolitan* version, found at Nicopolis, in the reign of Alexander Severus, A. D. 230. Out of these versions Origen made up his *Tetrapla*, his *Hexapla*, and his *Octapla*.* There were other celebrated versions, such as that of *Lucian* the martyr, who is said to have suffered martyrdom A. D. 314. That of *Hesychius*, and others, which we will pass by, and come to the Latin versions, the most ancient of which was the *Italian*, and which was succeeded by that of *Jerome*, a double version, one from the Septuagint, and the other from the Hebrew. From these two, in the course of time, was made up, as some think, that which is called the *Vulgate*, which has also many things out of Theodotion and Lucian, though others are of a different opinion; but it is not our province to decide. Other versions, made in modern times, we need not here notice.

I shall only add three remarks: *first*, that no *translations* can be equalled with the *original*, because the authors of the translations were not men divinely inspired, but liable to error, whereas the original was written by men inspired of God; and because the original is always a rule by which all translations are to be

* These were editions of the Scriptures, consisting of *four*, *six*, and *eight* versions, respectively placed together in parallel columns. Thus the version of *Aquila*, *Symmachus*, the *Septuagint*, and *Theodotion*, composed the *Tetrapla*; these four, together with the *Hebrew* text, and the *Hebrew in Greek letters*, as prefixed to them, composed the *Hexapla*; and these six, with those of *Jericho* and *Nicopolis* added, composed the *Octapla*.

examined; and it is better and purer to drink of the fountain, than of the streams. *Secondly*, that the authority of translations is yet great in regard to the doctrine they contain, which is divine, that is, if they faithfully give forth divine truth from the fountain; and it has been justly observed, that no version is so bad, provided it be executed with some degree of fidelity and diligence, which does not contain heavenly and saving instruction; hence the most dull and ignorant have, in the translation they use, sufficient for the firm foundation and building up of their faith. *Thirdly*, that the Septuagint version, although of great weight on account of its antiquity, and because it is read publicly and privately by the Jews, and quoted from by the apostles, is yet not to be compared with the original. For the authors of this version were only interpreters, not prophets; they erred grievously in many things; and hence the apostles, who often use it because of its general reception, yet frequently have preferred to quote from the original. Besides which it has been in many ways interpolated; hence it has been justly said, that we have only the ruins of it.

Before we end our disquisitions on the scripture, we will just inquire, what opinion must be formed of those other books which we have not reckoned in the sacred canon, and which yet are usually joined with the sacred books, such as *Tobit*, *Judith*, *Wisdom*, the books of the *Maccabees*, &c. We may briefly lay down the following reasons why these books are not to be acknowledged as divine, but merely human: *First*, they were not written by inspired men, which is plain from 1 Macc. iv. 46; ix. 27; where it is expressly said, That there were no prophets at that time; and also from 2 Macc. ii. 23, where the author complains of the great labour and difficulty he had in compiling his work, and in abridging the five books of Jason the Cyrenian, to excuse his own weakness and infirmity. The author of the book of Wisdom does, it is true, wish to be taken for Solomon, but no person in his senses will believe it, who duly considers that the Israelites in Solomon's days were free, and yet they are represented by the author of this book as subject to the power of enemies; and who considers also that this author makes an allusion, in ch. iv. 2, to the contests which took place *after* the time of Solomon. Hence most of the ancients have asserted that the book was written by Philo the Jew, after he had

suffered a rebuff from Caius Cæsar, in his embassy to him. *Secondly*, these books were never reckoned as canonical by the Jewish church, to whom "were committed the oracles of God;" neither were they recognized by Christ and his apostles, nor are they admitted by the more modern Jews. *Thirdly*, in these books there are many things doubtful, many false, and many absurd. Let us take a few out of many. In the book of *Tobit*, ch. v. 4, the angel Raphael is introduced like an actor, assuming another person or character, pretending that he was Azarias, the son of Ananias. In ch. vi. the angel, like a magician, suggests the design of driving away a devil by a smoke or perfume made of a fish's heart and liver, and ascribes to himself the office of presenting to God the prayers of the righteous, (ch. xii. 15,) which the scripture claims for Christ alone. In the book of *Judith*, the cruel deed of Simeon and Levi is highly extolled, which the Holy Spirit condemns, (Gen. xlix, 5); and Judith begs that God would give success to her falsehoods, and pretends to comply with the wicked lust of a drunken general. The author of *Ecclesiasticus* not only acknowledges his own weakness, but also attributes to Samuel the things which were never done by Samuel; and in ch. xlviii. 10, refers to Elias, what Christ (Matt. xi.) declares is to be understood of John the Baptist. The author of *Wisdom* falsely makes himself king of Israel. That the book of *Baruch* is falsely ascribed to Jeremiah, is proved by the Greek language in which it is written. For it is not probable, that he would have chosen to address his countrymen in a foreign tongue; and he falsely declares that he read the book in the fifth year after the destruction of Jerusalem, to Jechonias, and to the whole people at Babylon; for Jechonias was in prison, and Baruch had been carried away into Egypt, after the death of Gedaliah, (Jer. xliii. 6.) Besides, in chap. i. 10, he mentions the altar of the Lord; whereas there was none, the temple being destroyed. The books of the *Maccabees* also contain many things not only contrary to the analogy of faith, and to real history, as the things concerning Alexander, (1 Mac. i. 7,) the Romans, (viii. 16,) the ark, (2 Mac. ii. 4—7,) but also contradictory, for Antiochus, who in 2 Mac. i. 16, is said to have been stoned and beheaded, and torn in pieces in the temple of Nanea, is represented in chap. ix. 5, 9, as seized with a loathsome disorder, as he was hastening from Persia into Judæa. The books which are added to the

book of Esther and Daniel, are clearly proved to be uncanonical, from their containing things repugnant to the sacred canon. It is plain to every one who considers them, that the stories of *Susanna* and of *Bel and the Dragon*, cannot claim historical credit, much less canonical authority. The same judgment will be formed concerning the rest of these writings, by every attentive reader. 4. Our opinion is confirmed by the testimony of the Christian church, by that of Melito, of the council of Laodicea, of Athanasius, Jerome, Epiphanius, and others, who did not allow the divinity of these books. And even though it should be granted, as some think, that the New Testament writers quoted passages out of some apocryphal books, the character of these books would not be altered. For every one knows that the sacred writers quote Menander, Aratus, and Epimenides, (1 Cor. xv. 33. Acts xvii. 28. Titus i. 12,) yet who would reckon the writings of these heathen poets as canonical?

These books are called *Apocryphal*, either because they had no place in that secret and sacred chest or repository, in which the scriptures were kept, or because they were not read in public, but in private, which custom was however not always observed, since it appears from the third council of Carthage, that some uncanonical books were publicly read; or because they were of unknown origin, or for other reasons. On the contrary, the other books are called canonical, not merely because they have been placed in the sacred canon by the Jewish and Christian churches, but also because they claim in themselves to be accounted the only rule of faith and practice. Other apocryphal books I do not mention, such as the *Acts of St. Peter*, the *Gospel of St. Thomas, &c.* I will only bring forward the judgment of Jerome writing to Læta on the education of her daughter. *Let her be cautious about all apocryphal writings; and if at any time she should wish to read them, let her be aware that there are many bad things mingled with the good, and that it requires great prudence to seek the gold in the midst of the dirt.* But we have written enough concerning the scriptures.

CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY.

BOOK THE SECOND.

OF GOD IN THE UNITY AND TRINITY.

CHAPTER I.

OF THE UNITY OF GOD.

Since it hath pleased God to make himself known to men in the scriptures, the order of things requires, that, having established the authority which is due to the sacred writers, and the faith and reverence which must be given to their books, we should examine what these holy scriptures teach concerning God. Now there is nothing which they teach us, first, more clearly, than that there is one God only; the passages are numerous and well known; "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, is one Lord," (Deut. vi. 4.) "See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no God with me." (Deut. xxxii. 39; iv. 35 Isaiah xliv. 6.) "To us there is but one God, the Father," &c. (1 Cor. viii. 4—6.) "There is one God, and one Mediator," &c. (1 Tim. ii. 5. Ephes. iv. 6.) Reason itself also teaches us this; for whosoever has any thought and sense of deity, must acknowledge *that* only to be deity, than which nothing can be conceived better, more sublime, and more perfect; but of such a nature as this, there can be only one; for if such a being

could have an equal, we could conceive of some more perfect Being, having none equal to himself, and possessing all the perfections of that other deity in himself alone, and having him dependent on himself.

Again, if there were more Gods than one, there would be more *supreme Beings*, than one, which is impossible; for if there were several supreme Beings, either one would be greater than the other, or they would be entirely equal; if the former, one of these would be the sole deity, namely, that which excelled the other; if the latter, neither of them would be supreme, because that only is supreme, which is greater than all other beings. Therefore Phœbadius, bishop of Agenna, justly observes in his book against the Arians, *If there is not one only God, there is no God.* To which we may add the remark of Tertullian, *The soul, although confined in the person of the body, though surrounded and beset with depraved customs, though weakened by lusts and passions, yet when it repents, awakening as from a surfeit, or from sleep, or rising as from disease, both recovers its health, and calls upon God, for this reason only, because he is the true and only God, good and great, &c.*

Deplorable therefore was the blindness of the heathen, who, instead of the one true God, worshipped innumerable deities, as the Christian poet Prudentius expresses it:—

> "Nam tot templa Deûm Romæ quot in urbe sepulchra
> Heroum numerare licet, quot fabula manes
> Nobilitat, noster populus veneratus adorat
> Quicquid humus, pelagus, cœlum mirabile signat,
> Id dixere Deos, colles, freta, flumina, flammas."

> *As many tombs of heroes as adorn*
> *Imperial Rome, as many ghosts below*
> *As fame records,—so num'rous are the gods*
> *Whose temples by our people are ador'd.*
> *Whate'er of note, the earth, and sea, and sky*
> *Yea, hills, and rivers, and the fire, produce,*
> *They honour with the name of Deity.*

It must be allowed, however, that several of the heathens had better notions, as Epictetus, who says, *We must above all things learn that there is one God, who governs all things by his providence.* And Plato in his epistle to Dionysius, (if Plato were the author) thus speaks, *From this you may learn, when I write seriously, and when not; when seriously, I begin the epistle with the men-*

tion of one God; if otherwise, with the mention of more than one. But although the wiser among the heathens were of this opinion, it was not so with the great majority of them. And of this idolatry there were many reasons, such as their great misconception of the nature of a most perfect Being; the numerous wants of mankind, (for *frail and necessitous mortality*, as Pliny elegantly observes, *divided the objects of worship, so that conscious of his own weakness, every one worshipped that which he most needed;*) the multitude of the divine names; the variety of the divine attributes and works; the reverence which sons paid to their parents, subjects to their kings, and nations to the heroes who were the defenders of their liberty. *It is a very ancient mode*, says Pliny, *of shewing gratitude to benefactors, to enrol them among the deities.* And Lactantius, *From what did men derive their opinion of a plurality of Gods? Doubtless, all those, who are worshipped as gods, were once men, the earliest and most powerful kings; but who does not know that, on account of their virtue, by which they benefitted mankind, they received divine honours after death, or on account of the inventions and services with which they enriched the world, they obtained an immortal remembrance.* The last reason we may mention was, the advantage they derived from the stars and other created things.

CHAPTER II.

OF THE VARIOUS NAMES OF GOD.

The Scripture not only teaches us the unity of God, but also describes that one supreme Being by various names. Not that God needs any name, being the only one of his own nature; but, as all our knowledge begins with the names of things, the Scripture has given different names to the Supreme Being, and it is the peculiar honour of the church, that the true God hath revealed himself in it by his own name.

Among others, the name *Jehovah* stands conspicuous;

the true pronunciation of it is unknown; hence some call it *Jahve*, or *Juhave*, others *Jav*, as the ancient Greeks; others *Java*, *Jehova*, *Jehove*, *&c.* This name is frequently found in the sacred record, "I am Jehovah, that is my name;" (Isa. xlii. 8.) It denotes "him which is, and which was, and which is to come," (Rev. i. 4,) and properly signifies these three things:—1. An eternal Being, who is self-existent and independent; hence he is simply called *he that is*. 2. A Being, from whom everything else has its being. 3. A Being unchangeable, and faithful to his promises. In this sense God says, (Exod. vi. 3,) that he was not known to the fathers by his name Jehovah, because although he had often called himself by this name in speaking to the fathers, still he had not yet fulfilled his promises concerning the multiplication of their seed, the bringing of the people out of Egypt, and their coming into Canaan. This name belongs to God alone; it is never given, either properly or improperly, to any created being; not to the *ark*, for it was not the ark that was addressed, but God of whom the ark was a symbol, when it was said, *Arise, O Lord*, (Jehovah;) not to the *altar*; there was indeed this title inscribed on the altar, *Jehovah-nissi* (*my banner*), but it was not the altar which was called Jehovah; not to *Jerusalem*, when it was said, *the Lord* (Jehovah) our Righteousness, but he who had purposed to call Jerusalem to salvation was to be distinguished by this name (Jer. xxiii. 6.); not to the *Church*, although Jehovah is said to be there (Ezek. xlviii. 35.): not to any *created angel*, but to the angel of the covenant: and therefore, in Isaiah xlii. 8., after the words, "I am the Lord (Jehovah), that is my name," it is added, "and my glory I will not give to another."

The next is a name which also denotes the essence of God, *I am*, or *I am that I am*. (Exod. iii. 14.) The learned dispute whether this is really a name of God, but it is certain that this expression is of the same meaning as the name Jehovah. There is also the name יה (Psalm cl. 6.) often joined with that of Jehovah; but what it exactly signifies is not clear. Some think it is derived from a word signifying *to be fit*, or *becoming*. The Jews maintain that God is called יה from the benefits which he bestows on mankind. There is also the name אל, *El*, (Gen. xiv. xxi. 33. Psalm xxii. 2.) from a word signifying *strength* or *might*; and the name *Elohim*, either from the Arabic word signifying to *worship*, or the Hebrew to *swear*. It is of the same import as Jeho-

vah, though the Jews maintain that the former is a name of judgment, the latter of grace. This name is given to various creatures, as to magistrates and judges, who are God's vicegerents on earth (Exod. xxii. 28. Psalm lxxxii. 6,) also Exod. iv. 16, where Moses is said "to be to Aaron instead of God;" also to angels, (Psalm xcvii. 8, compare Heb. i. 6;) and to false gods. As to the name *Shaddai*, it is disputed, among the learned, whether it is derived from a word signifying *to destroy*, and signifies that God could destroy all things by the same power by which he created them; or from a word signifying *breast*, because God supports or sustains all things; or from two words signifying *who* and *sufficient*, because God is sufficient for himself and for all his creatures. If this last be the real derivation, we clearly see why God, revealing himself to Abraham (Gen. xvii. 1), calls himself by this name, viz. to intimate that he did not enter into covenant with him, as though he needed Abraham's help; on the contrary, that he abounds in every kind of good, so as to fulfil the promises which he had so richly set forth in this covenant. Or it may be derived from the Arabic word signifying to *bind* or *hold fast;* since God holds all things in subjection, When the word *El* is joined to this name (El-Shaddai) it is no where given to any creature.

The name *Adonai* is found in very many places, and seems particularly to mean that dominion by which God subjects every thing to himself. From this name the heathens called their Bacchus, Edonæus. With regard to the word, *Sabaoth*, the learned think that it is not a name of God, except when joined to the word God, and then it designates God as the Lord of hosts or armies, from which is plainly derived the appellation of *Sabasius*, given by the heathens to Bacchus. Of the Greek names by which God is designated, there are two principal ones: the first is Θεὸς (Theos,) derived either from θεῖναι, to *place* or *arrange;* or from θεῖν, *to run;* or from θεᾶσθαι, to *behold;* it denotes the nature of God. The other name is Κυρίος (Kurios,) by which word the sacred writers generally render that of Jehovah, but which is especially ascribed to Christ the Redeemer, who is called "Lord of Lords." Both these names are sometimes secondarily ascribed to creatures.

CHAPTER III.

OF THE SPIRITUALITY OF GOD.

Having briefly treated of the names, we must now more fully examine into the nature of God. We are sensible indeed that the infinite nature, of God cannot be perfectly comprehended by finite beings. Nevertheless, there are many things revealed concerning it in the scripture, which we are permitted to examine. The first idea that we form in our minds concerning God is, that he is a perfect Being, which the scriptures confirm, everywhere proclaiming the divine perfections. A general declaration of the perfection of God is given by Christ, when he says, "Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect," (Matt. v. 48.) But the sacred writings do also set forth his perfections particularly and singly, so that from them we may, by attentive consideration, discover that God is a *spiritual*, *thinking*, *living* Being, possessed of *understanding*, *will*, *wisdom*, and *omniscience; omnipotent*, *independent*, *omnipresent*, *self-existent*, *eternal*, *immutable*, *wise*, *just*, *holy*, *good*, *merciful*, and *infinite*. These perfections are so great that nothing can be added to them, or taken from them; they are not contrary to each other, although the effects of them may be so, and they are altogether identified with the essence of God. Now the first perfection which we conceive to be in God, is, that he is a *spiritual* Being, not consisting at all of matter. For since all matter is extended, and takes up space, and every thing of this kind is composed of parts, and therefore divisible, imperfect, liable to change, senseless and inert, which cannot be set in motion, except impelled by something else, and being impelled, is necessarily set in motion, or, meeting with other matter, loses as much of its own motion as it communicates to the other,—this cannot be attributed to God, without arguing imperfection in him, such as it is absurd to attribute to a Being whom we conceive to be most perfect.

Reason dictated to the very heathen the idea of God's spirituality. This was the idea of Pythagoras, according to Lactantius, of Plato, and of Numa, who on this

account forbade any image of God to be made. And what reason teaches, the scripture confirms: "God *is* a Spirit," says Christ (John iv. 24.) This passage indeed, according to some, is not to be thus rendered; but rather, "God *requires* a Spirit." For they maintain that, otherwise, the reasoning of our Saviour is by no means plain—God is of a spiritual essence, *therefore* he must be spiritually worshipped; for, say they, the manner of worshipping God does not depend on the true nature of the divine essence, but on the divine will; otherwise, no bodily worship ought to be paid to God, and none therefore would have been enjoined by him—which is not the case. But these reasons are not of sufficient weight, to prevent this passage from being adduced as a confirmation of the doctrine in question. For, in the first place, it is more natural to supply the word ἐστὶ (*is*) than the word ζητεῖ (*requires*;) the substantive verb *is* being frequently omitted in the Hebrew and Greek, which cannot be said of any other verb, at least so frequently. In the next place, Christ's argument is strictly correct, even if the common version be followed. For our worship ought to be that which is most suitable to the divine nature. Since, therefore the nature of God is spiritual, we ought to worship him *in spirit*, except he himself shall otherwise command, as he did under the Old Testament, where he exacted a worship for the most part of a carnal nature, although he did enjoin spiritual worship also. But now, Christ says, the time is come, when that ceremonial worship is to be abrogated; now God requires a worship suitable to his nature, thereby showing men that he is a Spirit.

Nor must it be thought strange, that God is every where in the scripture represented like man, having the members of the human body ascribed to him; for this is done to assist the weakness of our comprehension, and must be explained in a manner consistent with the divine nature. In short, by these members the scripture intends to point out the divine attributes; and it is to be observed also, that only those members of the human frame are attributed to God, which are either the principle of those human actions that are best known, as the *heart* and the *bowels*, not the *stomach*, *arteries*, or *veins*; or which are the instruments of those actions that are most worthy of man, as the *feet*, the *eyes*, the *hands*, &c. The *heart* is mentioned as the principle of vital actions; the *hands*, because by these we perform many things;

the *eyes*, because through them we gain the knowledge of many things; the *ears*, because we readily listen to those to whom we are kind; the *mouth*, because by it we give utterance to our thoughts; the *feet*, because by them we go whithersoever we wish. And thus these members represent the mercy, the power, the knowledge, the omnipresence, and other attributes of God. It must be observed also, that such members are ascribed to God, as perform extraordinary things: thus the scripture gives him eyes, but eyes which penetrate men's hearts, and see all things; ears, which hear the very secrets of the soul, and listen to all men, at one and the same time. And so of the other members.

Since God is a Spirit, it follows that he is *invisible.* Innumerable passages of scripture prove this point. "To the King, eternal, *invisible*," (1 Tim. i. 17.) "Whom no man hath seen or can see," (1 Tim. vi. 16.) "There shall no man see me, and live," (Exod. xxxiii. 20.) There are indeed many passages, in which it is said that God has been seen; and others, in which God promises that he will give the sight of himself to men in the future world: but these are to be understood,—1. Either of the vision of Christ, who, under a human form, gave us, as it were, a prelude of his incarnation: in this way Jacob saw him, and wrestled with him. 2. Or of the vision of Christ, as he will appear in the last day, in that human form which he assumed in the fulness of time: thus Job expected to see the Redeemer, saying, "I know that . . . in my flesh I shall see God; whom I shall see for myself and mine eyes shall behold, and not another," (Job xix. 26, 27.) 3. Or of the sight of some symbol, by which God testified his presence. 4. Or of a greater and clearer manifestation than ordinary; as when Moses is said to have "seen God face to face." 5. Or it denotes a perpetual and intimate communion with God, and the enjoyment of the divine favour and love, and of all the blessings which will thereby fall to our lot: in the same sense as we are said to "see life," to "see the kingdom of God," that is, to enjoy eternal felicity. 6. Or it is to be understood of prophetic vision, presented either in a dream or in a waking trance. 7. Or, lastly, it denotes a perfect knowledge of God, as great as a finite creature can attain; as when it is said that we shall "see God face to face." (1 Cor. xiii. 12.)

From the spirituality of God, we also infer that he is both a *thinking* and a *living* Being. For the first idea

that we have of a spirit is, that it is a thinking essence, therefore we must believe this concerning God. But it must be remarked, that God thinks not like men or angels, but in a far more perfect manner; which will be explained more at large hereafter, when we speak of the knowledge of God. Again, because every thinking being has life, we must believe that God is a living Being; and this the Scripture every where teaches, calling God "the *living* God," (Deut. xxxii. 40. Psalm lxxxiv. 2. Acts xiv. 15. 1 Thess. i. 9.) This life of God differs from the life of man in several respects. The life of creatures is distinct from the creatures themselves, but the life of God is the very essence of God. The creatures derive life from God, God from himself. The life of the former is frail and transitory; that of the latter is eternal, as will be shown hereafter. And therefore, when God is called the *living* God, it is not only to distinguish him from the false deities of heathenism, but from all creatures, who possess only a derived and precarious existence. Moreover this life of God is most happy, since he is called in the Scripture the "blessed" God. (1 Tim. i. 11, vi. 15.) And the correctness of the expression will appear to any one duly considering in what true happiness consists. For who would not call a Being happy, who wants nothing, has entire complacency in himself, and possesses all things; who is free from all evil, and filled with all good. On the whole, we may say, that God is a living Being—that he lives for ever—is life itself—has life in himself—is the fountain of life to all others—is most blessed, and the author of all felicity.

CHAPTER IV.

OF THE OMNISCIENCE OF GOD.

Since every being capable of thought is possessed of understanding and will, we are sure that God, whom we conceive to be a thinking Being, is also a Being that understands and knows all things. Reason itself taught the heathen this truth; hence the remarkable answer of

Thales to a man, who asked him whether any human action could be unknown to God. *No:* replied he, *not even any human thought.* And it is recorded as the opinion of Plato, that *all men have a certain secret persuasion, that God knows every thing, even the inmost thoughts of the mind.* Of the same opinion were the stoics, Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius, and others. But with still greater clearness is this truth set forth through the whole Scripture. "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight; but all things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." (Heb. iv. 13.) The apostle in this passage uses a metaphor derived from victims, from whose necks the skin was taken off, and which were divided or cut through so that all the intestines were opened, and the priest was able to discover whether the victims were without "blemish" or not. Now we must consider, first the *object*, then the *mode* of the divine knowledge.

The *object* of this knowledge is every thing that can possibly be known or understood, whether it be God himself, or all other things which can be conceived in or out of God; past, present, future; things which neither are, nor have been, nor ever will be; things necessary and contingent, done and thought of, from the greatest to the least. Hence it is said, "His understanding is infinite." (Psalm cxlvii. 5,) and that, "He knoweth all things," (1 John iii. 20.) God himself is the object of this knowledge, that is, he knows himself, both his own nature, and all his perfections; he knows also his own decrees, and all those actions which he performs in pursuance of his decrees, as it is said, "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world," (Acts xv. 18.) He knows all other things, even to the least; not only angels, men, the beasts, the stars, "the number of which he telleth," says the Psalmist, Psalm cxlvii. 4, and the plants, but even the very hairs of the head, which are said to be "numbered" by him, (Matt. x. 30). No one will reasonably deny that God knows also all things that are past. This knowledge of the past is set forth in the sacred writings under the figure of "a book of remembrance;" although it must be allowed, that God is said to *remember*, merely to point out his affording timely assistance, hearing our prayers, performing his promises, freely rewarding the godly, or severely punishing the ungodly. We cannot also deny that all future events are known to God, not only those

which we call necessary, but those also which we term contingent, and which, although decreed by God, are really contingent in respect to us, seeing they arise from a concurrence unknown to us of several things together. We cannot but believe this, since the Scripture teaches us that God knew and foretold future contingencies long before the event. Thus he knew that Pharaoh would harden his heart against the plagues; that the men of Keilah would deliver up David to Saul; that the Egyptians would afflict the seed of Abraham four hundred years; that Cyrus would deliver the people out of captivity; that the Jews would be unbelieving in the times of the Messiah, and would put him to death; that Judas would betray his master, &c. &c. Nay, "not even a sparrow falleth to the ground without God's knowledge," as Christ testifies. By his knowledge of the future God distinguishes himself from the idols of the heathen; "Let them bring forth, and show us what shall happen: declare us things to come. Show the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are Gods," (Isaiah xli. 22, 23). From numberless passages it is plain also, that the thoughts of the human heart are well known to God. "Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." (1 Sam. xvi. 7.) "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins," &c. (Jer. xvii. 9, 10.) "Lord, all my desire is before thee; and my groaning is not hid from thee." (Psalm xxxviii. 10.) And all these passages are confirmed from what we read of Daniel, by the Divine Spirit interpreting the dreams of the King of Babylon, and of Elisha discovering to the King of Israel the designs of the King of Syria, which he meditated in his secret chamber. One passage may suffice to prove the divine knowledge of human actions: "Doth he not see my ways, and count all my steps?" (Job xxxi. 4,) to which may be added the whole of Psalm cxxxix. Sins also are not excepted, Psalm xiv. 3. Jer. xvi. 17. Rev. ii. iii.

All things therefore, which are possible to be known, God knows, as the scripture every where teaches, and reason itself confirms. Yet we must not imagine that, because he is said to be acquainted with things the most minute, and those that are sinful, the divine being is degraded, on the one hand, and contaminated on the other. For it is necessary that a *perfect* being should know all

those things that can be known, and as far as these things are contrary to his law, it must be observed, that what is sinful cannot contaminate, as far as it is known, but only as far as it is approved or done. It must however be admitted that God sometimes speaks as if he were ignorant of something; but this ought not to appear more strange than what we read in numberless passages, in which *feet, hands*, &c. are ascribed to God; which expressions are to be understood only in a way consistent with the divine nature. We must not therefore be surprised that God is introduced (Gen. xviii. 21.) speaking of the Sodomites, "I will go down now, and see whether they have done," &c. God thus expresses himself in order to display his justice, that he might not appear to be hurried on to vengeance under the impulse of a blind fury; also, to set forth his long suffering, whereby he is not in haste to punish, though provoked by the obstinate wickedness of man; and also to set an example to magistrates in the administration of justice.

As to the *mode* or *manner* of the divine omniscience, we must speak with sobriety and caution, so as not to attribute to the deity any thing unbecoming or unworthy. Maimonides observes, that *to wish to know the mode of the divine knowledge, is the same as wishing to be God.* Now we must not at all imagine that God knows things in the same manner as men, who understand one thing at one time, and another thing at another time, and who understand the same thing sometimes imperfectly, at other times clearly, and who, from things known, proceed to things unknown. The divine knowledge is of such a nature, as not to admit of any indistinctness of apprehension, or labour of investigation and recollection, or difficulty of application. God comprehends all things by one single and individual act of mind, surveys them, as it were, with a single glance, and sees them distinctly, certainly, and therefore perfectly. Nevertheless the weakness of our conceptions obliges us to attribute to God a knowledge of two kinds; the one, by which he knows things that are possible, called by the schoolmen the knowledge *of natural and simple apprehensions*; the other, by which he knows things that will take place, called by them the knowledge *of liberty and vision.* The first kind of knowledge is founded on the *power* of God, the second has for its foundation the *decree* of God, who knows future things, because he has decreed that they shall take place.

This attribute of omniscience must *necessarily* be ascribed to God: otherwise there is an end to all religion, since nothing can more powerfully tend to establish it in the mind, than the belief that God continually beholds, and will finally judge, all our actions. This attribute, moreover, not only teaches us how we ought to regulate our conduct, since nothing escapes the infinite knowledge of God, but it also assures us that we can with confidence address our petitions to him in every place, and commit our cause to him, under the persuasion that the uprightness of our hearts is open before him, and that he will discover it, if not in this, yet at least in the future world.

With the knowledge of God we must join his *wisdom*, which the scripture every where ascribes to him, and reason confirms. For who can deny that wisdom *belongs* to a perfect Being? This attribute of wisdom conveys a more sublime idea than that of knowledge; for by it God knows what is necessary to be done, according to the circumstances of things, and in what order and manner it should be done; by what means he may best attain the end he designs, and thereby display his own glory. By this wisdom God orders every thing in a wonderful manner, in *measure*, *number*, and *weight*; a *measure* indeed not to be examined by the measures, a *number* not to be estimated by the calculations, a *weight* not to be balanced in the scales, of such creatures as we are. The ways of this wisdom are to man, for the most part, inscrutable, so that we must cry out with the apostle, "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" (Rom. xi. 33.) But although these ways are unknown, yet are they most righteous, and we must adore, and not curiously examine them. So wonderful is this wisdom of God, that it sometimes brings light out of darkness, life out of death, and a blessing out of a curse. To this supreme, and "only wise God," be honour and glory for ever. Amen.

CHAPTER V.

OF THE WILL AND AFFECTIONS OF GOD.

Every thinking being must not only have understanding, but also will; and since God must possess every thing which belongs to the nature of an intelligent being, a will must exist in him. The whole scripture teaches this: "Our God is in the heavens; he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased." (Psalm cxv. 3.) "I will do all my pleasure." (Isaiah xlvi. 10.) This *will* is not to be conceived of as a *mode*, but as an *act;* and it is also the very essence of God, since there is nothing in God which is not God; and hence it is plain that this will is eternal, since the essence of God is eternal. This will moreover is, as it were, simple and individual; and therefore God, by one simple and individual act, wills all things, even as by one single glance he sees and understands all things; but, because we are finite, we cannot form any proper conceptions of things, as they exist in an infinite Being; and therefore, God is conceived of by us, sometimes as the Ruler of the world and the Disposer of events, at other times as the supreme Lawgiver; hence it is that the scripture attributes to God a will of various kinds, according to the difference of its objects; one will, by which God decrees what he wills to be done, or to permit to be done; the other by which he prescribes to men their duty: the former regards the *futurition* and *taking place* of things, the latter is the *rule of our actions;* the one is always fulfilled, and cannot be resisted, (Rom. ix. 19,) the other is often violated by men. The *first* may be called the *will of decree*, because it decrees events, or the *secret will*, because it is, in general, though not always, hidden from us; or the *will of good pleasure*, "according to" which, Paul says that we are "predestinated." (Eph. i. 5.) The *second* may be called the *will of commandment*, because it prescribes to man his duty, or the *revealed will*, because it is revealed in the law and in the gospel, or the *will of approbation* and *complacency*, because it makes known what is pleasing to God or what he approves, and of which Paul thus speaks, "This

is the will of God, even your sanctification." (1 Thess. iv. 3.)

We have said, that by the *will of decree* God has purposed what he wills to *do*, or to permit. Now there are some things which God wills to do, that are good, but there are others which he neither does, nor can do, because they are evil, which, however, he permits to be done, and which he then overrules to good purposes. Thus he permits men to sin, but he is not the author of sin; on the contrary, he most strongly forbids it. The *will of commandment* also has two kinds of objects, the one good, the other evil; the former it enjoins, the latter it forbids. These two wills, although they are viewed by us as different, are yet by no means contrary to each other, because they are not directed to the same object. If indeed God did, by the power of his own decree, compel men to do those things which he has forbidden in his law, or if he had decreed that some things should be done by men, which afterwards he chose not to permit to be done, then he would will things that are contrary; but such is not the case, as will appear from the following example: God had decreed that Abraham should not sacrifice his son, and yet he commands him to sacrifice his son; these things appear contrary to each other, but they are not so; for the same God who had decreed that Abraham should not sacrifice his son, had decreed also to command Abraham to do so for this end, to try the patriarch; and at the same time, he had decreed to prevent Abraham from doing so. In this manner the cases are perfectly consistent; God decreed to command Abraham to sacrifice his son, in order to try his faith, and he actually commanded him in due time; God decreed to prevent Abraham from doing this, and he actually did prevent him. But in order that every doubt on this subject may be removed, let it be observed,—1. That strictly speaking, there is only one will in God, and that is the *will of decree*. 2. That that will has not only determined what shall be done by men, but has also determined what things shall be enjoined upon, or revealed to them. 3. That the *will of commandment* is, properly speaking, the execution of a part of the other will, namely, that part which hath determined what shall be revealed to, or enjoined upon, men in due time. For example: God hath required of men faith and obedience, but he had decreed thus to require; in requiring, therefore, he only executes what he had decreed. But if he

does not give to all the faith which he requires, it should excite no wonder, since in this way also he executes what he hath decreed, that is, not to give faith to all; thus there is no inconsistency between the *will of commandment* and the *will of decree*, since there is one and the same execution of both. This will of God is *immutable;* he is "the Lord that changeth not," (Mal. iii. 6;) it is also *free;* for, although the eternal act of God's will having been once passed, he cannot will otherwise, nevertheless he is perfectly free, because he is impelled by no external power, but by himself only, and because he always acts voluntarily and with reason, which things constitute the highest degree of liberty. To this free will of God we owe all that we possess; to it, therefore, we ought to submit; nor must we ever murmur against it.

With regard to what are called *affections*, although they do not properly exist in God, seeing they are connected with the ideas of passion or emotion, which argues weakness and mutability, and therefore would be contrary to the supreme happiness of God, yet are they attributed to him in the scripture, which speaks to men in their own style; but they do not designate any passions or emotions, nor are to be understood as different wills or inclinations in the Deity, (for this would imply a changeableness in him,) but as acts of the same will, and denoting different relations of it. We will speak of the principal affections; and, *first*, of *goodness*. Now we call *goodness* that affection in God, by which he is inclined to communicate himself to his creatures. The scripture every where declares it, (Psalm xxxvi. 6, 7; lxxiii. 1; Acts xiv. 17); and even the heathens called their Jupiter *Optimus Maximus*, (very *good* and *great*); and, as Cicero observes, *he is called optimus* before maximus, *because it is a greater and more acceptable thing, to do good to all, than to possess the greatest power*. The first act of God's goodness in time is *creation;* and because what is produced always depends on what produces it, the second act of goodness is *preservation*. This goodness, moreover, is either *general*, which embraces all creatures, or *special*, which regards *human* creatures, and *most special*, which regards the elect. Nor should it seem strange that God is not equally good towards his creatures, for in this inequality is displayed his sovereign freedom and dominion.

From the *goodness* springs the *love* of God, by which

God is inclined towards the creature, and delights to do it good, and, as it were, to unite himself with it. There are three kinds of this love usually ascribed to God. The *love of benevolence* is that by which God is moved to will some good to his creature as a creature, without any regard to the excellence which may be in it. This kind of love is the same as his *goodness*, and by it God, from eternity, willed good to the creature, even though unworthy, and deserving of hatred. The *love of beneficence* is that by which God does good in time; this expression *in time* must be noted, so that this love may be distinguished from the love of benevolence, which is from *eternity*. The *love of complacency* is that by which God is inclined towards the creature that is just and holy. By the first kind of love, God elects us; by the second, he redeems and sanctifies us; by the third, he rewards us being holy. Of this last Christ speaks, (John xiv. 21,) "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him." With this love of God is connected his *grace*, by which he is induced to communicate himself to the creature, freely and of his own accord; not from desert or debt, or any other cause out of himself; and not to add any thing to himself, but for the benefit of the object of this grace. For *grace* is nothing else but unmerited favour; it is always opposed to merit; "If it be of grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace." (Rom. xi. 6.) Now this word *grace* is taken in scripture, sometimes for God's favour, by which he chose us from eternity unto life; sometimes for the favour, by which he receives us in time, and accepts us in the Son of his love; sometimes for the *effects* of grace, or the ordinary gifts bestowed by God on believers, such as faith, hope, and charity, or for the extraordinary gifts which were miraculously bestowed in the first ages, for the edification of the church. This *grace* is accompanied by *mercy* or *pity*, concerning which the Psalmist speaks, (Psalm ciii. 8; cxlv. 9; also Lament. iii. 22, 23,) which, as existing in God, is not a sorrow or sadness of mind arising from the miseries or evils of others, but a ready disposition to succour the miserable. It does not spring from any external cause, such as usually stirs up this emotion in human beings, but from the sole goodness of God. The greatness of this *pity* is shown by the extreme unworthiness of those who are the objects of it, compared with

his majesty, by the number of the sins they have committed, and the greatness of their misery, by the severity of divine justice, by the eternal duration of this pity, and by its innumerable effects.

To the affection of *love* is opposed that of *hatred;* which is an emotion of displeasure, and abhorrence of a person who is unlike us, and disagreeable to us. As existing in God, it denotes his disapprobation of sin, his purpose of punishing the sinner, by withholding those saving blessings which flow from his goodness. The passages of scripture are numerous, in which the hatred of God is spoken of. "Thou hatest all the workers of iniquity. (Psalm v. 5; xi. 5; xlv. 8; Prov. vi. 16, 17, &c.) The effect of God's greatest anger, is the punishment of eternal death; therefore, we must guard against this hatred of God, in order to which, sin must be hated most sincerely, for it is only sin which incurs the divine hatred.

To the love of God belong what may be called his *desires* or *wishes*, &c. Now it is the absence of good which excites desire; but since God enjoys all good, it is plain that desire cannot properly apply to him; yet it is frequently attributed to him in scripture, and to this may be referred all those passages in which God is introduced speaking to this effect: "O that my people had hearkened unto me" (Psalm lxxxi. 14; Isaiah xlviii. 18; Luke xix. 42.) Therefore this desire in God denotes, that man's obedience is highly pleasing to him, and that he will not pass it by unrewarded; at the same time it points out man's duty, and his great wickedness in not discharging this duty. To this desire is opposed *aversion*, by which God is said to loathe sin, and to have no pleasure in the destruction of the creature. From what has been said, we clearly see what ideas we ought to have of the *hope* of God, of his *joy*, *sorrow*, *jealousy*, &c. *Hope* or *expectation* in God, intimates that the thing is due to him. Thus when he said, that he "looked that his vineyard should bring forth grapes," (Isaiah v. 2,) he meant that the vineyard owed him fruit, and could not be fruitless without sin. God is said to *rejoice* when any thing is pleasing to him; and also when he performs any thing which displays his glory, as when he does good to his people, or when he punishes the rebellious and ungodly. (Deut. xxviii. 63; xxx. 9.) God is introduced as *fearing*, (Deut. xxxii. 27,) to show that the Israelites escaped more on account of their enemies than

for their own deserts. And sometimes fear is attributed to him, to denote his intention of anticipating, or preventing, some evil. *Sorrow* in God denotes that something highly displeases him, and is contrary to his perfections. *Jealousy* in him denotes his fixed purpose of not giving his glory to another, and of punishing him who would take it.

I will only add a few remarks on the *repentance*, and on the *anger* of God. The former is attributed to him in many places of Scripture, (Gen. vi. 6. 1 Sam. xv. 11, &c). Now in what sense in this attributed to him? In order to repentance, properly so called, there must be two things concurring in man; the first is inward grief of mind, whereby he detests what he has done, and could wish it had not been done; the second is a change of the work done. With respect to the former, repentance cannot apply to God, for it would argue the greatest imperfection, as it springs from the contemplation of a thing ill done, or a work heedlessly undertaken. With respect to the latter, repentance may apply to God, because he sometimes changes his work, and so far does the same thing which men do, who repent. But this change of work does not imply a change in the mind of God, for by one and the same act of his will he decrees both to do the work, and afterwards to alter it; thus he did at the same time decree to create men, and to destroy them all by a deluge some ages after. It must be observed also, that this *repentance* in God denotes that mankind have rendered themselves unworthy of the benefits bestowed on them by God, and deserved punishment by their wickedness; or on the other hand, have so reformed their lives, that God is pacified towards them. As to the divine *anger*, we are sure, that it does not signify any such emotion or passion of the mind as arises from bile inflaming the blood round the heart, such being altogether inconsistent with the calm and happy nature of the deity; but it denotes his just and free purpose of punishing sinners. It is spoken of, John iii. 36. Rom. i. 18; ii. 8. The effects of this anger are both *temporal*, which are either bodily, (Lev. xxvi. Deut. xxxiii.) or spiritual, such as blinding, hardening, &c. (Rom. i. 24, 26,) and *eternal*, i. e. banishment from God, and being cast into everlasting fire. (Matt. xxv. 46.)

CHAPTER VI.

OF THE JUSTICE OF GOD.

The word *justice*, when spoken of God in scripture, is taken in different senses; for sometimes it denotes that most sacred union of divine qualities, shining forth in the words and actions of God, so that he does nothing but what is agreeable to the nature of an all-perfect Being; and thus the word is the same as that of *holiness*, which is everywhere ascribed to God, (Isaiah vi. 3. Levit. xi. 44, &c.) Sometimes it signifies that particular justice, by which he gives to every man according to his deeds, and which is seen in the proper distribution of rewards and punishments. Thus Moses speaks, "He is the Rock, his work is perfect, for all his ways are judgment; a God of truth, and without iniquity, just and right is he." (Deut. xxxii. 4.) Again, *justice* is taken sometimes for the *will* of God in punishing sinners, and sometimes for the very punishment inflicted by justice. It is also often taken for the *kindness* and *faithfulness* of God in performing his promises.

Now the very idea of an all-perfect Being shows us that God is a Being most just, wise, and true; to conceive of an *unjust* God involves a contradiction. Yet it may be fairly inquired, whether that justice of God, by which he punishes sin, and which is termed *avenging* justice, is essential to him, and whether it is inconsistent with his nature to let sin go unpunished. Now this is proved by two principal arguments. 1. If the love of holiness, or the hatred of sin, is essential to God, then his avenging justice will be so also. The former the scripture teaches in those passages in which God is represented as a Being of perfect holiness, and extremely abhorring sin: "Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity." (Hab. i. 13, also Psalm v. 4, 5.) And reason itself teaches it; for we cannot form any idea of God, without forming the idea of a most holy Being, hating sin. Now this hatred of sin is nothing else but a fixed determination to punish sin, as we have shown before: if then a fixed determination to

punish sin is essential to God, his avenging justice will be equally so; if this be essential, he cannot and will not suffer sin to go unpunished. We must not therefore conceive of God as a creditor, who can forego his claims, although sins are spoken of in scripture as debts, but as the supreme Ruler and Judge of the universe, who is bound to preserve inviolate the majesty of his own laws, and to whom it would be disgraceful to permit his justice to be offended with impunity. Again, if this justice were not an essential attribute of God, there could be no legitimate reason, why he should have delivered up his beloved Son to death; for the perfect wisdom of God will not allow us to say that this was done without reason and extreme necessity.

The argument is confirmed both by *the dictates of conscience*, which summons men to the bar of God, and greatly torments them after the commission of sin, and also by *the consent of all nations*, among whom the opinion of God being a just judge, so far prevailed, that they sacrificed even human victims, in the hope of appeasing an incensed deity. It is confirmed also by the whole economy of sacrifices, which under the Old Testament shadowed out the necessity of an expiation of sin for the satisfaction of divine justice. It is true that *to punish* is called God's "strange work," (Isa. xxviii. 21,) but it is so called, because it would be far more pleasing to God, who does not delight in the death of sinners, if men would live in such a manner as to leave no room for his judgments; not to say that this passage treats of God's vengeance on his own people. Yet elsewhere God testifies that he derives joy from the punishment of the ungodly, (Deut. xxviii. 63. Hosea x. 10). Although this justice generally advances with a slow step to the punishment of sins, it makes up for its slowness by its severity. It shines forth in all God's judgments, but it will particularly display itself in the last judgment, when he "will render to every man according to his works."

And here we may add something concerning the *truth* or *faithfulness* of God, which is often expressed by the word *justice*. *Truth* sometimes simply denotes righteousness, as in Psalm xix. 9, "the judgments of the Lord are true," i. e. "righteous;" but it is also taken for the agreement or consistency of the divine words with the divine mind, and with things as they really are; for the truth of God is not like the truth of men, which is

merely an agreement with their mind, while, on account of their ignorance of many things, it does not accord with these things. God is true in all his words, commandments, and promises. Truth is also taken for that virtue or excellence, by which God always makes good his promises. (Rom. xv. 8.) It is the same as *faithfulness*, by which God performs what he hath spoken, or promised. (1 Cor. x. 13. Heb. x. 23. 1 John i. 9.)

The justice of God is not opposed to those attributes of *mercy* and *long-suffering* which the scriptures ascribe to him, when they teach us that he does not willingly punish, and that punishment is his strange work, that the greatness of the punishment does not answer to the greatness of the offence, (Psalm ciii. 10,) and that he is ready to pardon, and slow to execute his wrath, (Jer. xviii. 7, 8. Rom. ii. 4. 2 Peter iii. 9.) For although God necessarily punishes, it does not follow, that he always punishes as much as he is able, and as soon as he is able, or that he always proceeds against the offender. The *severity* which God shows when he punishes, is shown against those towards whom he hath exercised much long-suffering, as in the case of the Israelites; against those who have received great benefits at his hands, as in the case of Lot's wife, whom he had rescued from the burning of Sodom; against Nadab and Abihu, on whom he had bestowed the honour of the priesthood; against those who have committed a sin, which might easily have been avoided, and who have thereby set a pernicious example to others, as in the cases of Uzzah, the Bethshemites, and the man who gathered sticks on the sabbath-day. It is also shown against those, who sin at the same time when God makes an extraordinary display of his goodness in the performance of many wonders or miracles, as in the case of Ananias and Sapphira, also against those, who commit enormous crimes. There are other reasons for this severity, unknown to us, yet none on account of which it could be blamed. It concerns us therefore not to despise the riches of God's long-suffering, lest we treasure up for ourselves his divine indignation.

CHAPTER VII.

OF THE POWER AND OMNIPRESENCE OF GOD.

Having spoken of the will of God, it remains that we should speak of his *power*, an attribute, by which God can do whatever is possible to be done: this is not really to be distinguished from his will, for in God *will* is actual *power* itself; but it is called power when the thing is not yet done, or when it is not to be done although there is nothing to hinder the doing of it. That God's omnipotence is nothing more than his efficacious will, is very evident, because, since God is an all-perfect Being, he acts or works in a most perfect manner, and no manner can be conceived more perfect, than that which is by the act of the will. This power of God the scripture everywhere proclaims, "With God nothing shall be impossible," (Luke i. 37,) "With God all things are possible," (Mark x. 27, also Psalm cxv. 3. Phil. iii. 21.) Reason proves it; for to conceive of an impotent God is not to conceive of a God at all. Pythagoras called those fools, who denied the power of God.

The object of this power is every thing that God wills, and which does not involve a contradiction, as that *a thing is*, and *is not*, *at the same time*, that *a circle is square*, &c. and does not also imply sin and imperfection, as *to lie*, to *eat*, to *drink*, to be *hurt*, to *die*, &c. For as the object of infinite knowledge is every thing which can be known, so the object of infinite power is every thing which can be done, that does not imply a contradiction on the part of the thing itself, or of the agent. Therefore it is not every thing which is conceived by us, that is the object of the divine power; for many things are imagined by us, which are very absurd and unworthy of God. At the same time we must not believe, that that only is the object of this power, which can be conceived by us; for God can do many things which we cannot comprehend, as the creation of the world out of nothing; but we ought firmly to believe

that God can bestow upon us all things necessary to our salvation—that he can safely preserve us from every evil and from every enemy—that he can bestow on his followers the good things he has promised, and inflict on the ungodly the punishment they deserve—that he can "do exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think," (Eph. iii. 20.) Who ought not to fear a Being so powerful? Who is not bound to have recourse to him, to trust in his promises, and to obey his precepts?

With the power of God we must connect his *dominion*, by which he possesses the right or authority of doing all that he does. This dominion has for its foundation, the dependence of all the creatures on their Creator, and the vast superiority of the divine nature to all others. It was the saying of Aristotle, that if there were any man who surpassed all the rest in wisdom, he would be worthy to have dominion over all. God, therefore, on account of his surpassing dignity and excellence, in regard to which there is no proportion between him and the creature, possesses absolute and infinite dominion over all the creatures. This dominion is further founded on the numberless benefits which God bestows on his creatures. By virtue of this dominion, God has a right to deal with his creatures as he pleases; nor ought any one of them to complain, if another be preferred to it, or if it be afflicted while another abounds in blessings. This absolute authority was acknowledged by Job, when he said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord," (Job i. 21.) By Eli, when he exclaimed, "It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good," (1 Sam. iii. 18.) And by David, who says, "I was dumb, because thou didst it," (Psalm xxxix. 9.) But how far that right is to be extended, it is not our province to determine.

The scripture teaches us that God is not only omnipotent, but also *omnipresent*. "Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool." "Do not I fill heaven and earth?" "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit; whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there," &c. "Behold the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee." (Isaiah lxvi. 1. Jer. xxiii. 24. Psalm cxxxix. 7—11. 1 Kings viii. 27.) The last of these passages contains the words of Solomon, when he consecrated the temple; and he spake them, in order that no one might, like the Gentiles (who thought that they could by certain incantations invoke the deity from

heaven into their temples,) believe that Solomon himself imagined he could bring down the true God from heaven, to dwell in that house which he had built; therefore that great king, in the very commencement of his prayer, declares that the very heavens cannot contain God. The more rational among the heathens were of the same opinion. Thus Virgil—

> Ire per omnes
> Terrasque tractusque maris, cœlumque profundum.
>
> *Through heaven, and earth, and ocean's depth, he throws*
> *His influence round, and kindles as he goes.*
>
> Quo fugis, Encelade, quascunque accesseris oras,
> Sub Jove semper eris.
>
> *Enceladus, to any country flee—*
> *In Jove's dread presence thou wilt always be.*

Xerxes could not allow the deity to be confined to temples made with hands, and avenged this impiety by destroying the temples of the Greeks. Pythagoras defined God to be *a Being diffused over the whole nature of things;* and Simplicius affirmed, that *God was always every where present with all his perfections.* In the Koran of Mahomet, it is read, *Where three are together, God is the fourth; where there are five, God is the sixth,* (and so on).

The mode in which God is every where present, it does not become us curiously to examine, nor rashly to determine; it is indeed impossible to explain it. The following truths are however certain:—*First,* that the omnipresence of God is not to be conceived under the idea of any extension or diffusion of the divine essence through all things: for, in this way, God would be considered in the light of a body; which cannot be allowed, as we have before proved. *Secondly,* that God is omnipresent by virtue of his power, energy, and operation. He is omnipresent in regard to his *operation,* for he works all in all, giving to all the creatures their being, and preserving them, bestowing on all of them their strength and power of action. Now since he works all this by his power, we say that he is omnipresent by virtue of that power. And as this is not different from the divine essence, we maintain that he is omnipresent in regard to his essence. We do not indeed deny that

God is very often represented as *ascending* and *descending*, *approaching* and *departing;* but this does not at all disprove his omnipresence. God *approaches* and *descends*, when he gives testimonies of his presence; he *departs* and *ascends*, when he withdraws and withholds from men the symbols or signs of his gracious presence. *Thirdly*, that the omnipresence of God is not unbecoming the divine majesty, as though God could not be in the most impure places, without being contaminated; for since he is a Spirit, he cannot be touched by what is corporeal. *Fourthly*, that the omnipresence of God does not prevent him from being said to be present in a peculiar manner in certain places and persons, where he gives the signs and effects, either of his majesty, his glory, or his grace. Thus, he is said to be in heaven, because in it there is a brighter display of the divine glory, presence, and majesty, whence it is called metaphorically the *throne*, *palace*, or *sanctuary* of God. He is also said to be in heaven, in order that we may form only the greatest and most sublime conceptions of the Deity, and raise our minds in devotion from earthly to heavenly things—from the lower to the higher sphere. *Fifthly*, that the same God, who fills all things with his presence, and is not confined or limited to any space, who unfolds his glory to angels and saints in heaven, dwells in the faithful on earth by his Spirit, and in the church by his grace; to say nothing of Jesus Christ, in whom, as the scripture teaches us, "dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." This omnipresence of God ought to render us sure of his divine assistance in all dangers, and diligent in religion through all our lives, since he is "not far from every one of us," (Acts xvii. 27.) *He is wise*, says one, *who lives in the world as in a temple, and thinks of God as every where present.*

CHAPTER VIII.

OF THE ETERNITY AND OTHER ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.

That God is a Being who *necessarily* exists, is evident; for necessary or self-existence belongs to the nature of an all-perfect Being: and if such a Being could be con-

ceived, as not possessing such a kind of existence, he would be conceived as one without perfection. Besides, if God is not necessarily existent, it might be that, at some time or other, he did not exist. But if this be granted, an evident impossibility will arise; for God did not then derive his existence from another, since we can have an idea of no being so perfect as God, and therefore no being could confer on another a perfection which it did not itself possess. Neither could he have derived being from himself, because he did not exist, (as supposed;) he must therefore be self—that is, necessarily—existent. From all this, therefore, results his *eternity;* for what necessarily exists, never can have been or can be non-existent, and therefore has neither beginning nor end. Reason itself claims this attribute for God; nor was it unknown even to the heathens. Proclus, a follower of Plato, proved God to be eternal, because he exists of himself. Thales defined God to be *a being* that is without beginning and end; before all things: and who was never born. But what reason teaches, the scriptures far more clearly point out. Thus, in Psalm cii. 26—28, the Psalmist, comparing the most permanent of all visible things, namely, heaven and earth, shows that they both had a beginning, and will have an end; but that God abideth for ever. "Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure; yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end." "Who only hath immortality," says Paul, (1 Tim. vi. 16,) because he alone is without beginning and end. So great is this attribute, that nothing else can share in it.

Now *eternity*, properly so called, such as belongs to God, denotes three things—to be without beginning, without end, without succession. In this eternity we cannot conceive of any thing prior or posterior, any thing past, present, or future. No one, indeed, can doubt that God is without beginning and end; but it may be a question, whether no successive duration is applicable to him. We confess that this is incomprehensible to us, who are accustomed to judge of eternity as we do of time, and to ascribe to God what is applicable only to men. Yet there are many reasons which prevent us from ascribing to God any thing like successive dura-

tion. For duration, properly speaking, respects not the *essence* of things, but their *existence*, as far as we conceive of existence as something distinct from essence. No one, for example, ever attributed duration to the essence of a triangle. Now eternity has indeed respect to God's existence, but which is in no way different from his essence. For God possesses eternity, seeing that his essence is so perfect as to include existence in it; therefore it cannot be conceived under the idea of duration. Augustine, on Psalm ci. cii., thus properly speaks:—*Eternity is the very essence of God, which has nothing changeable. In it there is nothing past, as though it no longer exists—nothing future, as if it does not yet exist; in it there is nothing but what* IS, *there is no* WAS, *there is no* SHALL BE.

The confused notions which we are apt to form of the duration of God, arise from the weakness of our understandings, and from our habit of conceiving of God along with the creation, and, after the creation, of the world; and thus attributing to him that which is applicable only to those things which exist *in time;* whereas we ought to consider God as existing before the creation of the world, and then we shall no more think of ascribing duration to him, than space or situation. We may conceive of eternity as *a point* around which is described the circumference of a circle, and which being itself immovable, bears an equal relation to every part of that circumference, not having any *above* or *below;* so that it may be said to co-exist with all the three differences or diversities of time, such as the past, the present, and the future.

Besides the eternity of God, we may notice his *simplicity*, by which we mean nothing more than the intimate connexion and entire unity of all the attributes of God, and their oneness or identity with the divine essence itself. This simplicity is thus expressed by Augustine:—*Let us conceive of God as good without quality, great without quantity, creative without indigence or need, present without situation, entirely every where without place, eternal without time, changing every thing without any change of himself.*

From the *simplicity* of God follows his *immutability*, which denotes nothing else than such a state of the divine essence and attributes, as is not subject to any change. Now this immutability is proved by scripture: "God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son

of man, that he should repent." (Numb. xxiii. 19.) "I am the Lord, I change not." (Mal. iii. 6.) "With whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." (James i. 17.) Besides, that which possesses all perfection, cannot be changed. If God changed, he would do so either *for the better*, or *for the worse*, or *for something equal.* Now he cannot change *for the better*, because he is the best: neither *for the worse*, for then he would not possess all perfections, for he would not have that by which he could preserve himself from becoming worse; nor can he receive any additional perfections equal to what he has already, otherwise he would not possess all. Therefore, there is no changeableness in God; neither in his essence, his eternity, his understanding, nor his will; not in his *essence*, for being the *first*, he cannot be superseded by any prior being; being *all-powerful*, he cannot be injured by any; being most *simple*, he can be corrupted by none; being *immense*, he cannot be increased or lessened; being *eternal*, he cannot fail. There is no change in his *eternity*, for where there is no succession, there is no mutation; neither in his *understanding*, for the knowledge of God is all-perfect; nor in his *will*, for the will of God is all-wise, to which nothing unforeseen can happen, so as to compel him to change his intentions for the better. Again, nothing can prevent and resist his will; he does, indeed, will the various changes of things, but his will itself remains unchangeable. This immutability of God is the foundation of our faith and hope.

From all that has been previously said, we conclude that God is an *infinite* being. To be finite is an imperfection, and a very great imperfection; whereas our idea of God must be the idea of a being altogether, and in every sense, perfect. This infinity is diffused through all the divine attributes; his divine nature is infinite—infinite in itself as possessing infinite perfections; his power is infinite, his wisdom, goodness, mercy, &c. are infinite. "Canst thou," says Zophar, "by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea." (Job. xi. 7—9.) All the arguments, therefore, which prove God to be an all-perfect, prove him to be an infinite Being.

From these attributes and perfections result the su-

preme *glory* and majesty of God; which he possesses in himself from eternity; and which he displays to the creatures in time, unfolding and illustrating before them his excellences in his works, as in the creation, the deliverance of the Israelites, &c., but especially in the sending of his Son into the world. This glory the angels celebrate in heaven, and mankind ought to celebrate on earth. All God's attributes are wholly incommunicable to the creatures; yet there are traces of some of them in the creatures, which therefore are improperly termed by the schoolmen *communicable.* And thus far concerning the divine attributes.

CHAPTER IX.

OF THE TRINITY.

In the preceding chapters we set forth the unity of God, and his principal attributes; we must now observe that the scripture expressly mentions *three* persons to whom the divine nature is ascribed, namely, the *Father*, the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghost.* Of these three the scripture speaks unitedly in various places; for not to mention the baptism of Christ, in which the Father revealed himself by the voice that was heard; the Son, who was the subject of the divine oracle, was seen; and the Holy Ghost descended in the shape of a dove: the following passages are well known: "Go ye, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." (Matt. xxviii. 19.) "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all." (2 Cor. xiii. 14.) See also John xiv. 16; 1 Cor. xii. 3; Gal. iv. 6. So also in Rev. i. 4, 5, John seeks grace "from him which is, and which was, and which is to come," namely, from the Father, and "from the seven spirits," namely, from the Holy Ghost, (so called on account of his manifold gifts, and with an allusion also to the seven churches of Asia,) and "from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, &c." And not only in the New

Testament is there mention made of these three unitedly, but in the Old Testament also. "I will mention the loving-kindnesses of the Lord, &c., for he said, Surely they are my people," &c., (this is said of the Father.) The angel of his presence saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them, &c., (this concerning the Son.) But they rebelled, and vexed his Holy Spirit, (this concerning the Spirit.) (Isaiah lxiii. 7—10.) "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me (the Son), because the Lord hath anointed me (by his Spirit) to preach the gospel to the poor." (Isaiah lxi. 1.) Nor must we omit those passages in which the plurality of persons *appears* to be pointed out, such as "Let us make man in *our* image." "Behold the man is become as one of *us*." "Go to, let us go down, and confound their language." (Gen. xi. 7.)

Concerning these three persons we must remark, that they are distinct from each other, as is evident from the passages already quoted, and many others; thus Psalm cx. 1, "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand." Here the Lord who speaks is distinguished from the Lord who is spoken to. So also John xv. 26, "when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me." Here the Comforter, or Spirit, is plainly distinct from the Father and the Son. Again, they are so distinguished, that some things are said of the Father which cannot be said of the Son, and some things of the Son which are no where said of the Spirit. The Father is said *to have begotten* the Son; but the Son is no where said to *send* the Father. The Spirit is said to *proceed* from the Father, and to be *sent* by the Son; but no where is the Father said to proceed from, nor the Son to be sent by, the Spirit. Yet are these persons distinct in such a manner, that they are not three Gods but one God; for the scripture every where proves, and reason confirms, the unity of the Godhead. There are, therefore, three persons in one divine essence; and this is clearly established by the passage in 1 John v. 7, which is brought forward and quoted by Cyprian, although not read in many copies. A far greater number of reasons can be alleged why this passage should be said to have been struck out by heretics, than to have been inserted by the orthodox. It was more to the advantage of heretics to suppress this passage, than to that of the orthodox to

add it, because, if it were genuine, the heresy of the former would be entirely overthrown; if spurious, the orthodox creed was in no danger, being clearly established from *other* passages of scripture. The connection also of the text confirms our opinion; for unless this verse be admitted, there seems no reason why John should say, "There are three that bear witness *in earth*," not having before said any thing of "three witnesses *in heaven*." Nor can it be objected that these words *in earth*, were also added afterwards, for the contrary appears from verse 9, where mention is made both of the *divine* and the *human* testimony, "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater."

This mystery of *three in one*, is called the mystery of the *Trinity*, a word not expressly written in the scriptures, but wisely invented, and advantageously used, for the purpose of exposing the shifts and subterfuges of crafty heretics, just as other words have been invented and used, such as ὁμουσίος (of the same essence), ουσια (essence), ὑπάρξις (subsistence), &c. Concerning this mystery we must inquire soberly, and speak modestly, since the human mind cannot conceive, nor mortal tongue express, the greatness of it; and, therefore, we can have nothing to do with the unbridled audacity of the vain and speculating schoolmen, who, by their plausible and dangerous subtleties, have given room for the introduction of various heresies. We may examine things revealed, but not rashly pry into secret things, *lest* as Prosper remarks, *we should be convicted of unlawful curiosity in the latter, and of blamable negligence in the former.* Distinguished men, both in this and in former ages, have attempted to render this mystery plain by many examples. I admire their ingenuity, united as it is with an ardent desire for the promotion of Christian truth; while I read what they have written, my mind is captivated both by their ingenuity and by their elegance; but when these attractions of learning and eloquence are removed and the mind is brought down to a little closer consideration of the subject, all that they have advanced is, in a great measure, forgotten. But although this mystery is incomprehensible to mortals, it must not be rejected by us: for it is not strange that finite beings, such as we are, should not perfectly comprehend the nature of an infinite Being. It is enough to have proved from the scriptures these two points, that there is *one* God, and that the Godhead

is ascribed to *three* persons, distinct from each other. The latter we have begun to prove, and shall prove still further. But to assist our understanding on this subject, we may observe that the divine essence is infinite; also, that we do not comprehend how this essence is common to three persons, for this reason,—because we judge of the divine essence as we do of a finite essence, which cannot subsist in more than one. Further, that the divine essence subsisting in a plurality of persons, arises from the Infinite nature of Deity, but that these persons are no more than *three*, is only known from revelation. Gregory Nazianzen excellently remarks on this subject, *I cannot attempt to think of one, but I am instantly surrounded with the splendour of three; I cannot attempt to distribute the three, but I am instantly carried back to the idea of one.* These three, in whom the divine essence subsists, are called *persons*, which is the term we shall make use of in the ensuing pages; we confess, indeed, that it is not so appropriate, but for want of other terms, we are compelled to adopt this, in common with the whole Christian church.

CHAPTER X.

OF GOD THE FATHER.

Having proved that the divine nature is in scripture attributed to three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, we must now treat of these persons separately. To begin with the Father, we need only make these three observations:—1. That the Father is in general mentioned by the sacred writers before the Son and Holy Spirit; (see Matt. xxviii. 19; 1 John v. 7,) not because he is anterior to the Son and Spirit in age or time, for eternity belongs equally to the three; nor because he excels the others in dignity, for the three adorable persons possess the same majesty, glory, power; in short, the same perfections: but he is placed *first*, because he is represented as *begetting the Son*, and as *sending the Holy Spirit*, 2. We observe that we never read of the

Father that he was begotten or sent by any other: on the contrary the Son is said to be begotten by him, and the Holy Ghost to proceed from him; nor is he any where said to work by the power of another, as the Son is said to do nothing of himself. (John v. 19.) The Father in the work of salvation is considered as the supreme Judge, who directs all things, who requires satisfaction, who receives it from the Surety, and who, to sum up all in a word, maintains the majesty of Godhead, for which reason he is sometimes called *God* in contradistinction from the Son or the Spirit. We add no more; neither is it necessary to show that all divine attributes belong to him, for this has been already sufficiently proved. I will only add that he is here called the *Father*, not in reference to *creation*, by which we are all "his offspring," (Acts xvii. 28,) or to *adoption* in Christ, (Eph. i. 5,) but in reference to that extraordinary relation which he bears to the second person in the Trinity.

CHAPTER XI.

OF GOD THE SON.

HAVING spoken of the Father, we must now speak of the Son, i. e. of Christ, who in the fulness of time assumed human nature; and here we have to prove three things: —*That he is God; that he is equal with the Father; that he is begotten of the Father.* With respect to the first, viz. that Jesus Christ is God, it will not be difficult to prove it. And first of all we remark, that he is called God in numberless passages of scripture. "The Word, i. e. the Son, was God." (John i. 1.) To understand this to mean a kind of subordinate and created God is absurd, since it is not to be believed that John, in the very first words of his history, would have used the name of God improperly, without adding any explication, and thus have led the faithful into the most dangerous error of believing the Word to be the true God when he was not so. Again: Thomas, addressing Christ, exclaimed,

"My Lord, and my God," (John xx. 28.) The Son is called "God manifest in the flesh," (1 Tim. iii. 16.) "Over all, God blessed for ever," (Rom. ix. 5.) Here the context does not admit of these words being referred to the Father, but to Christ; who "came from the fathers, as concerning the flesh," and who, as concerning his divine nature, is "God blessed for ever." He is called "Our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ,"* (Titus ii. 13.) "The true God, and eternal life." (1 John v. 20.) And in Heb. i. 8, the apostle thus speaks, "Unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom." Again: he is called *Jehovah*, or *Lord;* for that which is read in Numb. xiv. 22, of the Israelites tempting Jehovah, is applied to Christ, by St. Paul, 1 Cor. x. 9, saying, "Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents." And not only is he called "The Lord," but "The Lord our Righteousness," (Jer. xxiii. 6). We must observe that the name of God is not so given to any angels or men, as in the above passages it is given to Christ.

Not only is he called God, but all the attributes of deity belong to him, *Eternity* is ascribed to him, for he is not merely said to have been "before Abraham was," (John viii. 58,) nor merely to "have been in the beginning," (John i. 1,) but before all the works of God: for thus speaks eternal Wisdom, which is the same as the Son, "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his ways, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was, when there were no depths," &c. (Prov. viii. 22, 23, 24.) For in no other way is eternity described in scripture, as may be seen from Psalm xc. 2; xciii. 2; ciii. 17.) And that *Wisdom* in the above passage is the *Son* of God, will appear to any one who considers, that nothing is said of this Wisdom, which is not elsewhere said of Christ; and that if only a divine *attribute* were here introduced speaking, there was no need to declare its eternity in so many words. For no one can doubt the eternity of God's wisdom, any more than the eternity of God himself. Nor would a being deserve the name of God, who could have been at any time without wisdom; or even if it were necessary that wisdom should so laboriously and carefully establish its own eternity, there

* This is the proper rendering of the original *τυ μεγάλου Θεοῦ κὰι Σωτῆρος ἡμῶν*, not as it is in our version.

appears no reason why it should so distinguish itself from God, as to glory in having been "brought up with him," and to rejoice and exult in having been "daily his delight rejoicing always before him."

Christ's *Omnipresence* is proved from Matt. xviii. 20, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." (Matt. xxviii. 20.) "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." To which we may add, (John iii. 13,) where Christ speaking on *earth*, declares that he is in *heaven*. "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man, which is in heaven." His *omnipotence* is proved from Rev. i. 8, where he is called "the Almighty;" from John v. 19, where it is said, "What things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise;" and Phil. iii. 21, where Christ is said "to be able to subdue all things to himself;" but there are further proofs from the circumstance of divine works being also ascribed to him. His *omniscience* appears from John xxi. 17, "Lord, thou knowest all things;" and from Rev. ii. 23, "All the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and the hearts." His *immutability* is clear from Heb. i. 11, 12, "They (the heavens) shall perish, but thou remainest. Thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail." It is equally easy to prove the same of other attributes. It is, then, enough to establish the deity of Christ, that the names of God, and divine attributes, are given to him; such as *Creation*, (Heb. i. 10,) "Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thine hands;" which passage no person in his senses will understand as referring to the new creation. Again: "All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made," (John i. 3.) "By him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible. All things were created by him, and for him." (Col. i. 16.) Again: the works of *preservation* and *government* are ascribed to him, when he is said to "uphold all things by the word of his power;" (Heb. i. 3,) which also is proved from his power in working miracles. No one will deny that the work of *redemption* is attributed to him, (Acts xx. 28,) also *remission of sins*, *sanctification*, the *sending of the Holy Ghost*, the *giving of eternal life*, the *judgment of the world*, and the *raising of the dead*. (Matt. ix. 6; Eph. v. 26; John xv. 26; John x.

28; John v. 22; Acts xvii. 31; John v. 21.) The *building* of the church is attributed to him, in Heb. iii. 4, from which passage the deity of Christ is indisputably established; for after the sacred writer had said that Christ "was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house," he adds, "for every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God."

To these arguments we may add another, derived from that *religious worship* which is due to God only, and which is yet paid to Christ. 1. We are *commanded* to *believe* in him. "Ye believe in God, believe also in me." 2. To *hope* and *trust* in him. "Kiss the Son: blessed are all they that put their trust in him." "There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles, in him shall the Gentiles trust." (Rom. xv. 12; Isaiah xi. 10.) And this is the more worthy of remark, because he is pronounced accursed, who "trusteth in man. (Jer. xvii. 5.) 3. Angels are commanded to worship him, (Heb. i. 6,) which passage is particularly to be noted, because it is a quotation from Psalm xcvii. 7, where this worship is claimed for "the Lord, who reigneth." Every knee is commanded "to bow" to him, (Phil. ii. 10.) The apostles seek "Grace and peace" from him as well as from the Father, (Rom. i. 7; 1 Cor. i. 3; Rev. i. 4, 5.) The faithful are described as those who call on the name of Christ, (Acts ix. 14; 1 Cor. i. 2,) and "every creature" is introduced as ascribing "Honour, glory, and power unto the Lamb," (Rev. v. 13.) From all that has been said, therefore, it is plain that Christ is God; and this cannot be denied without the greatest impiety; for, as we ought to take care not to call any being God, who is not God, so, on the contrary, we cannot, without the greatest crime, deny the name and honour of God to a being, to whom the scripture gives the divine name and perfections; and so much the less can this be denied, because, since God "giveth not his glory to another," as he declares by Isaiah, it is impossible that *he* should not be the true God, to whom are ascribed the name, the attributes, and the works of God, in which his glory consists. Let this truth then be firmly fixed in our minds, that *Christ is God.*

All the arguments which prove Christ to be truly God, prove him to be the *supreme God*, and *equal with the*

Father. For to suppose two Gods, one of whom is inferior to the other, is to be totally ignorant what God is. For the idea of God is the idea of a Being who has none greater, more powerful, more perfect, than himself. But in order that this truth may be placed beyond all doubt, we shall confirm it by six or seven arguments. The *first* of these is derived from Phil. ii. 6, where the holy apostle says of Christ, that "being in the form of God, he thought it not robbery to be equal with God." What can be spoken more plainly? Is it likely that Paul would have broken forth into these expressions, if Christ had not been the true and supreme God? The *second* argument is founded on John x. 30, "I and my Father are one." This passage cannot be explained of a unity of consent or will, for Christ thus speaks, to prove that none can pluck his sheep out of his hand, seeing he was one with the Father, whose power, he says, is so great that no one can pluck these sheep out of his hand. He means, therefore, to prove that his own power is not less than that of his Father, because he was one with him in essence; and in this sense the Jews understood him, for they attempted to stone him, because he made himself God. The *third* argument is derived from Isaiah vi, compared with John xii. 39, 40, 41. No one will venture to deny that Isaiah there speaks of the supreme God, whom he saw "sitting upon a throne, high, and lifted up; the seraphims standing and crying, Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of Hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory." But John, in the passage above cited, expressly declares, that *Isaiah then saw the glory of Christ*. Christ therefore must be the supreme God. The *fourth* argument is taken from Isaiah xlv. 22, 23, compared with Rom. xiv. 10. No one will deny that the prophet is speaking of God, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else. I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear." But the *apostle* applies this to Christ—"We shall all," he says, "stand before the judgment-seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God." The *fifth* argument is from Isaiah liv. 5, where God thus addresses his church, "Thy Maker is thy Husband, the Lord of Hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth, shall he be called." Now who

will deny that through the whole of the New Testament, Christ is described as the Bridegroom, and the Redeemer of the Church? The *sixth* argument is drawn from Psalm xcvii. 7, compared with Heb. i. 6, "Worship him, all ye gods," which words the Psalmist speaks on behalf of the supreme God, since he says, in verse 1, "The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice." But the writer of the epistle asserts that these words were spoken concerning the Son. "Again, when he bringeth the first-begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him." The *seventh* argument is founded on Zech. xii. 10, "They shall look upon me whom they have pierced." Compare this with John xix. 37, and Rev. i. 7. Now that Zechariah speaks of the supreme God, no one will doubt, who hears the first words of the chapter—"The burden of the word of the Lord, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him."

It would be easy to bring forward other proofs, as Heb. i. 10, compared with Psalm cii. 26, and Rev. ii. 23, compared with Jer. xi. 20: xvii. 10; but what have been adduced are sufficient to prove, that Christ is the supreme God, and not inferior to the Father. But if anything is said concerning the Father, which is not said concerning the Son, as when the Father is said to *beget* the Son, this only proves that there is a distinction between the Father and the Son, and not that the Father is greater than the Son. Again, if the Son is said in any passage to be inferior to the Father, and to work by the power of the Father, such passage only shows that there is something in Christ besides the divine nature, viz. the human nature, according to which he is inferior to the Father, and also that there is a certain order of operation between the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and a kind of economy; but it by no means proves that Christ, *as God*, is inferior to the Father.

But not only does the scripture teach us, that the Son is God, and the supreme God, but also declares that he is *begotten of the Father*. "The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee." (Psalm ii. 7.) In Prov. viii. 24, 25, Wisdom declares that she "was brought forth," for so the Hebrew word is properly rendered, and so also the Septuagint renders it. And this is the true reason why the Son of God is said to be "the only begotten," (John i. 14,) "his own Son," (Rom. viii. 32;) nay, he is so called the Son of God, that

to none of the angels was such a name ever given, as the apostle declares, (Heb. i. 5,) and in this manner he is distinguished from others, who in the scripture are called sons of God, either by creation, or by adoption. This generation no mortal can comprehend; in fact we do not understand by the term anything else, than that the Father from all eternity shared his name, his perfections, and his glory, with the Son. But in what way this communication took place, let no one ask us, for we are ignorant of it, and are not ashamed to confess our ignorance. For we may be allowed to be ignorant of what we cannot possibly know. It is justly said by Cyril, *Believe that God has a Son, but in what way be not curious to know; for though you seek, you will not find; do not therefore lift yourself up, lest you fall: what is commanded or revealed, that only seek to understand.*

All that we have to observe on this subject is, that Christ was begotten from eternity, as is shown in Prov. viii. 25, where Wisdom declares herself to have been "brought forth before the mountains were settled," that is, "from eternity," which is confirmed by Mic. v. 2, "Out of thee shall he come forth unto me, that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." It is also proved by all those passages which prove Christ to be God, since God is eternal. Christ is not therefore called the Son, either on account of his conception by the Holy Ghost, or his appointment to the mediatorial office, or his resurrection from the dead, or his exaltation to the Father's right hand; these are not the reasons on account of which he is called the Son of God, although we may from these infer that he was so. Hence Paul says, that he was "declared to be the Son of God by the resurrection from the dead." (Rom. i. 4.) For Christ existed long before he was born of a virgin, and is the supreme God, as we have already proved: but especially consult Heb. iii. 6, where the apostle teaches us, that Christ was the *Son of God, as God*, since he says that "Christ as a son, was over his own house," having previously said, (verse 3,) that he had "builded the house," and (verse 4,) that "he who built all things was God." He is therefore called the Son of God, because begotten of the Father, and because, "as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself," (John v. 26.) We must observe also that the mode of this generation is not to be estimated by the laws of human nativity, or

of any created thing, for not so wide is the heaven from the earth, as the generation of the Son is from other generations; for in this divine generation the Father is not older than the Son, nor the Son younger than the Father; both are eternal, and this generation took place without any change. Here the understanding not only of men, but of angels, is at a loss; here we must lay our hands upon our lips, and be silent.

CHAPTER XII.

OF THE HOLY GHOST.

CONCERNING the Holy Ghost we have to inquire, what He is, whether a mere *power* of God, or really a *person* distinct from the Father and the Son—whether He is *God*—from whom He *proceeds*—why He is called the *Spirit*, and the *Holy Spirit?* To begin with the first inquiry, it is easy to show that the Holy Ghost is a *person subsisting* distinct from the Father and the Son; and this is proved by all those passages in which he is expressly distinguished from them, as John xiv. 16, "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;" and John xvi. 13, "When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak of himself," &c. Who can believe that these words are spoken of a mere power, and not a person? So also Matt. xxviii. 19, where the disciples are commanded to baptize in the name of the Father, Son, and Spirit, no one will surely say that any man can be baptized in the name of a mere power or virtue. So also those passages in which we are commanded not to "grieve the Holy Spirit," as Eph. iv. 30, which cannot be said, except of a person; and those also in which men are said to sin against the Holy Ghost; and especially that passage in which the sin against the Holy Spirit is distinguished from the sin against the Father and the Son, as Matt. xii. 31, 32,—for he against whom men thus sin, must be a person, yea, a divine person. We may also bring forward those pass-

ages in which the Spirit is distinguished from his gifts and operations, as 1 Cor. xii. 4, "and there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit." Moreover, after the apostle had said that "to one is given the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge, the gifts of healing," &c. he adds in verse 11, "But all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will." And this argument is the more cogent, because the apostle distinguishes the Holy Spirit from his operations, in the same way in which he distinguishes the "differences of ministrations" from "the Lord," and the "diversities of operations" from "God," (verse 5, 6.) To which we may add those passages, in which the Spirit is represented as descending in the shape of a dove, or of divided tongues. For only persons, and not virtues, or accidents, can assume visible appearances or forms of this kind. We conclude therefore, that the Holy Spirit is a person subsisting distinctly from the Father and the Son, although some things may be attributed to him, which do not seem to agree with the idea of a person; but then we are to understand such things as referring to his gifts.

Now the same arguments which prove the deity of the Son, might easily prove the deity of the Spirit; but to be brief, we will bring forward five only. The *first* we shall take from Isaiah vi. 9, 10, compared with Acts xxviii. 25, 26, for in the Acts, Paul shows that Isaiah is speaking of the Holy Ghost, "Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers." But we have proved in the former chapter that Isaiah is speaking of the supreme God, the same as the Son, of whom also it is said Isaiah speaks, (John xii. 41.) The *second* argument is from Acts v. 3, 4, where Ananias, whom Peter declares to have "lied to the Holy Ghost," is said also to have "lied unto God." The *third* argument is derived from 1 Cor. iii. 16, and vi. 19, where believers are called "the temple of the Holy Spirit." Now a temple is the residence of God only. *If*, says Augustine, *we were commanded to build a temple of wood and stone to the Holy Ghost, this would be a plain proof of his divinity, because this act of worship is due to God alone; how much plainer then is the proof of it, that we are not to build a temple to him, but to be ourselves his temple?*

The *fourth* argument is derived from Matt. xxviii. 19, already so often quoted; for not only does this passage prove the Spirit to be a person, but also a divine person.

For he, in whose name we are baptized, is considered as the author of the covenant of grace; who has authority to institute sacraments for the sealing of that covenant; who can promise and give grace; and whom those that are admitted into the covenant are bound to worship and serve; none of which can be said of any created thing. We allow, indeed, that the Israelites were said to be "baptized unto Moses;" but this is a very different thing, for it only means that the Israelites were in a solemn form, admitted to the profession of the religion and worship revealed through Moses, and were initiated into his doctrine, when they were under the cloud, and in the sea; for that continuing under the cloud, and passage through the sea, are here called by the name of *baptism*. To this passage may be added those in which the apostles wish grace and peace, and other blessings, from the Spirit, no less than from the Father and the Son, as 2 Cor. xiii. 14. Rev. i. 4.

The *fifth* argument is taken from those passages in which the attributes of God are ascribed to the Spirit, as *omnipresence*, "Whither shall I go from thy spirit?" &c. (Psalm cxxxix. 7, 8)—*omniscience*, "The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God," (1 Cor. ii. 10.) Divine works are also attributed to him, as the *conception of Christ*, (Luke i. 35,) the *working of miracles*, (Matt. xii. 28. 1 Cor. xii. 4—6,) the *government of the church*, and *the sending of ministers*, "The Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." "Take heed to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers." (Acts xiii. 2; xx. 28.) So also our *illumination*, *sanctification*, and the *raising up of our bodies*, and other works which we need not mention. We must not, however, omit to say, that the scripture very seldom mentions the *adoration* and *invocation* of the Spirit, because, in the economy of grace, the Holy Spirit is generally regarded as the author of the petitions we address to God, but not so as to be less an object of divine worship than the Father and the Son.

We must now say something concerning the *procession* of the Holy Ghost. The passage in John xv. 26, shows that he proceeds *from the Father*. "When the Comforter is come, even the Spirit of truth which proceedeth from the Father." Again, that he proceeds *from the Son*, is proved by those passages in which he is represented as being sent by the Son as well as by the

Father: he is also called the Spirit of the Son. (See John xvi. 7. Rom. viii. 9. Gal. iv. 6.) This procession is quite different from generation; for the Holy Spirit is always said to proceed from, and never to have been begotten by, the Father; nor is he ever called *the image* of God. But we must not curiously inquire into the nature of this difference; let us guard against the unbridled and unsuccessful boldness of the schoolmen, who attempt to explain it. We may only observe concerning the term *Spirit*, by which the Third Person of the Trinity is called, that it is difficult to find the true reason of this appellation. It is not likely that he is called so to express his nature, which is quite different from the nature of bodies, for the nature of the Father and the Son is equally spiritual. Some think he is so called, because he proceeds from God in a way of *breathing*, but this is to explain what is obscure by what is still more obscure. *Perhaps* he receives this name, because this adorable Person is set forth to us as "the Power of the Highest," even that power by which the Father performs every thing which he has decreed in his wisdom. For it is almost always the custom, in every class of things, to attribute the power of self-motion and the power of moving other things to some spirit. We decide nothing on the subject. We may add a word or two on the epithet *Holy*, which is given to the Spirit, so that he is called the *Holy Spirit*. Now he is thus called, not only on account of his unsullied purity and glorious majesty (for even the heathens represented majesty by the term holiness,) as though he were holier than the Father and the Son; for holiness is equally ascribed to the Three Persons, (Isaiah vi. 3,) and the divine holiness, being infinite, does not admit of degrees,—but because, in the order of the divine operations, the sanctification of believers is usually attributed to him, as election is to the Father, and redemption to the Son. And now we have said enough of the sacred mystery of the Trinity.

CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY.

BOOK THE THIRD.

OF THE CREATION AND PROVIDENCE OF GOD.

CHAPTER I.

OF THE DIVINE DECREES.

Having spoken of the Being and Attributes of God, order requires that we should speak of his works, and first, of those internal operations which are called *Decrees*, and which precede the external works of God. Now by the term *decree* we understand a fixed and unchangeable purpose in the mind of God, concerning that which he will do or permit to be done. That such *decree* exists, is evident from scripture, which is accustomed, in expressing this decree, to use sometimes the word *counsel*, as Eph. i. 11, "He worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." "My counsel shall stand," (Isaiah xlvi. 10.) Sometimes the words, *purpose*, (Rom. viii. 28;) *good pleasure*, (Eph. i. 5, 9. Matt. xi. 26;) *predestination*, (Rom. viii. 29;) *foreknowledge*, (Rom. viii. 29.) It is evident also, from the entire perfection of God, which does not allow that any thing should be done without his will; and indeed from his complete knowledge, by which he knew from eternity, not only every thing that *could*, but also every thing that *would*, take place. Now he could not certainly know what would come to pass, if he had not decreed it. This was not unknown to the very heathens. Hence Marcus Antoninus said, *That this should happen to thee was fore-ordained from eternity.* And Curtius has these words: *Although they may at-*

tempt to elude the argument, who think that human affairs are directed and governed by chance, yet I maintain that, by an eternal appointment, and by the connexion of secret causes long before ordained, every event has its own order, according to an immutable law. Now decrees are not to be attributed to God in the same sense in which they are to men, who require deliberation previous to action, and whose will is often doubtful and changeable; but they are attributed to God in such a way, that all his works may appear to be full of wisdom, and nothing to be done without his knowledge and will.

That these decrees are *eternal*, is proved from scripture: "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world." "Who hath saved us according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began," (Eph. i. 4. 2 Tim. i. 9.) And Paul also speaks of the "hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world, for our glory:" (1 Cor. ii. 7); for by all these expressions eternity is designed. Besides, it would be unworthy of an all-wise and omniscient Being to make decrees only *in time*, according as circumstances might arise. The idea we have of God, as an all-wise Being, does not permit us to doubt that these decrees also are *most wise;* and this the scripture teaches—"O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God," (Rom. xi. 33). They are also most *free* or *independent*—"Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight," (Matt. xi. 26.) This is evident from the consideration, that, in whatever God does, he is influenced by none but himself, which is the highest degree of liberty. They are also *unchangeable*, which the scripture likewise teaches —"My counsel shall stand," (Isaiah xlvi. 10.) The reason why men alter their determinations, is either *ignorance*, or *impotence*, or *wickedness*, or *instability*, but none of these can be attributed to God. God does indeed sometimes destroy what he has made; but this does not take place as if he had altered his decree, for the same Being who had decreed to make, had decreed also to destroy; the thing is changed, but not the will of God.

From this unchangeableness of the divine decrees it follows, that God has decreed nothing which does not come to pass; yet this does not take away the liberty of the creature. It is indeed difficult to conceive how this absolute certainty of events can consist with the liberty

of man. Still, nothing is more certain, than that every thing that takes place has been decreed by God, and that we all act as free agents—It is enough to know these two things. Only be it observed, that the same decree which hath determined future events, hath also determined the mode in which they shall take place, so that all the creatures act agreeably to their nature—the inanimate creatures by a physical necessity, but the rational with reason and free agency. For though the immutability of the divine decrees takes away from men that liberty, called by divines the liberty of *independence*, which belongs only to God, who, being independent of all other beings, acts therefore independently, and has the creatures, both in their *existence* and *operations*, dependent upon himself, yet it does not take away from them the liberty of *voluntariness*, by which a rational creature acts of its own accord, and with previous deliberation; for the decree concerning the operation of second causes does not destroy the nature of them; and such liberty as this is essential to every rational being. Moreover, this immutability of the decrees incontestably proves that there are no such things as *conditional* decrees, that is, such as depend on a condition which may, or may not, be performed. Such decrees cannot be supposed without also supposing, either that he who decreed is ignorant of the issue, or that the issue is not in the power of him who decreed. But neither of these can be said concerning God. It is not, indeed, to be denied, that the promises and the threatenings of God are conditional, but from these no conclusion can be drawn in favour of conditional decrees. For promises do not determine the future event, as decrees do, but merely show what is pleasing to God, and what is not, and also show the connexion between the condition which is required, and the thing which is promised.

Besides the *eternity* and *immutability* of God's decrees, we must say something of their *extent*. This is so great, that nothing takes place in the world which God hath not decreed should take place; still it is certain that God is differently concerned in these events, according as they are either good or evil; the good he hath decreed to do, the evil only to permit. For since God is the author of all good, and cannot be the author of evil, he must do what is good, and cannot do that which is evil; and yet, since nothing can happen contrary to the knowledge and will of God, we say that he permits evil, though he

in no way approves of it. From this may be inferred what answer must be given to the following question—*Whether the end of every man's life is, with all its circumstances, so unchangeably fixed by the decree of God, that he cannot depart out of life at any other period of time, or by any other kind of death, than that which actually falls to his lot?* For if all that happens in the world was known by God from eternity, and if nothing could be foreknown by God, which he did not also decree should take place, it follows that the end of human life is fixed and determined by God.

Now this is further proved, 1. From Job xiv. 6. "Since his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass." 2. From those passages, in which the end of life is expressly foretold; as in the case of Moses, (Deut. xxxi. 14); David's child, (2 Sam. xii. 14); Jeroboam's son, (1 Kings xiv. 12); Ahaziah, king of Israel, (2 Kings i. 16); the sons of Eli, (1 Sam. ii. 34); our Saviour Christ, and very many others. For since whatever is foreknown by God, will certainly take place, it necessarily follows, that the manner and the time of each individual's death was determined, as well as certainly known by God. And this is further evident from the most accidental kind of death being represented as determined by God, for which see Exod. xxi. 13, and also from the *conception* and *birth* of man, as well as his *life*, being represented as ruled and directed by God. (Ps. cxxxix.) For if that which is of inferior moment, is ordered by God, surely that which is of the greatest moment such as the day on which depends the eternal happiness or misery of man, cannot be dependent on man himself. The same thing is further evident from the circumstance of all events having such a connection with each other, that one very often depends on the other, and therefore it is not probable that the Being who decrees and orders other events, should not have provided for, and decreed *this* event also. The heathen were fully persuaded of this truth: thus Seneca, *No one dies too soon, seeing he never could have lived longer than he did; every one has his term fixed, which will always remain where it is fixed, nor will any favour* (on the part of God), *nor endeavour* (on the part of man), *make it longer.*

With regard to human life being sometimes said to have been prolonged, as in the case of Hezekiah, we

must not imagine that it was prolonged beyond the time fixed by God, but beyond the time in which, according to the order of second causes, or the violence of disease, the persons concerned *appeared* to be near death. In this sense men's *days* are said to be *shortened*, not as if God chooses that they should die before the time he has appointed, but because, according to the laws of nature, or the constitution of the body, they appeared likely to live longer. Moreover, from the term of our life being fixed, we are not to conclude that medical assistance is useless. God generally uses it as the instrument of preserving those whom he pleases to continue living; but we are only to conclude from it, that no reliance is to be placed on physicians, as if they were the arbiters of life and death. Nor must this same doctrine prevent us from offering up prayers for length of days: it only teaches us so to moderate our prayers, as to submit ourselves, and every thing belonging to us, to the good pleasure of God. It should also render us undismayed in danger, while we follow the leadings of Providence, but not rash, so as to run into danger without any necessity.

Although we must believe that God hath decreed all things by one single and individual act of his will, yet there is no reason why there should not be laid down some order in the things decreed, so that the weakness of our comprehension may be thereby assisted. Divines take several views of this subject; not to reckon all, the following view may be given: 1. God decreed to create the world, and to create man, for we cannot conceive God as having decreed any thing concerning man, before he had decreed to create him; and this was the first decree which he executed in time. 2. God decreed to permit man's fall, and that his sin should be transmitted to his posterity; and this decree may be said to be the next in order. 3. God decreed not to condemn all men, though all deserved death, but to have mercy on some, whom he appointed to salvation. 4. Since his justice would not permit him to save man without satisfaction, God decreed to send his Son, who might, by his death, satisfy that justice, and purchase eternal life. 5. God, well knowing that Christ's satisfaction would avail none without being known and received, decreed to reveal it to men through the preaching of the gospel, and thereby to gather to himself a church; and also to give the Spirit for the purpose of producing in us faith

and holiness. 6. God decreed to crown with eternal glory those whom he appointed to salvation, for whom Christ purchased it by the merit of his death, and whom the Holy Spirit sanctified; and this is the last decree that will be executed. Now this is the order we shall follow as we proceed in this work, and, therefore, that the execution may correspond with the decree, we shall treat *first*, of the creation of the world, of angels and men, together with their fall; then we shall proceed to the decree concerning the salvation of men, and the means whereby God has executed it.

CHAPTER II.

OF THE CREATION IN GENERAL.

It is not our business to inquire why God, who does not need our assistance for his own happiness, was pleased to form the creatures, in order that he might display his own perfections in them. It belongs not to man to aim at knowing what God hath chosen to conceal; it is enough to know that that will was accomplished when it pleased the Supreme Being to create what he had designed, and to begin the execution of the plan which he had, with the greatest wisdom, marked out from eternity. Nor does it become us to inquire why God did not create the world sooner; therefore, it was a smart reply which a godly man gave to one who scoffingly asked him, what God had been doing before the creation, namely, *That he had made a hell for all curious and prying inquirers.* Now by *creation*, we understand nothing else but that act of the divine will by which he produced the whole universe out of nothing, and willed that those things should exist which did not exist before. This creation the scripture usually expresses by the word ברא (bara), which signifies properly *to produce any new thing by a single act of power, or to effect any thing by extraordinary power*; for it does not always signify to *produce out of nothing*; neither does the Greek word

κτίζειν, which denotes also any mode of producing a thing, or the Latin word *creare*, which very often signifies to *beget*, or *make in any way*, or to *place in some dignity*, (as to *create* consuls,) or to *be the cause* of any thing, (as to *create troubles to a person*.) Before this creation, nothing existed but God, therefore, the world is not eternal; neither is the matter of which it is framed. This is capable of proof, not only from scripture, which every where teaches us that God created heaven and earth, and all things "in the beginning," (Gen. i. 1; Rev. iv. 11,) but also from *reason*, which teaches us that it is absurd to ascribe to an imperfect being the greatest perfection of all, namely, eternity, which is the sole property of the Supreme Being, and cannot be shared with any other. To maintain the *eternity* of the world is no less ridiculous, not to say impious, than to assert that the world is God, as he did, who said—

> Jupiter est, quodcunque vides, quocumque moveris,
> *Whate'er you see, where'er you turn, is Jove.*

Several of the wiser heathens acknowledged the world to have been created by God. Thus Plato called God *the Maker of the visible world*. Sanchoniathon has recorded the opinion of the Phœnicians on the origin of things, in terms so closely resembling those of Moses, that they appear to have read his books. The Egyptians also, as an emblem of the origin of the world, represented their god *Cnephus* as spitting an egg out of his mouth. The very followers of Epicurus opposed the notion of the world being eternal, as Lucretius and others; on this point Epicurus was far sounder than the leader of the Peripatetics, although he committed a no less grievous error in maintaining that the world was made up of an accidental combination of atoms. We cannot sufficiently wonder that there have been, and still are found, persons who assert the eternity of matter, merely because they cannot conceive that God should not be always doing or producing something, as if God needed the creatures, and were not sufficient for himself. He could not be inactive who was contemplating himself and his own perfections.

The world, therefore, was made, and matter was created, out of which the world was formed; but all things were not made in the same manner; some were made

out of nothing, some out of the pre-existent matter, yet unformed and shapeless. That some things were made out of nothing, the apostle intimates, when he says, "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear," (Heb. xi. 3,) which passage may be explained by one in the book of Maccabees; where a pious mother, encouraging her son to martyrdom, directs him to contemplate the heaven and the earth, with all things in them, and to know that *God made them out of things not existing;* and thus Chrysostom explained the clause τὰ ὄντα ἐξ ὀυκ ὄντων, *things existent out of things non-existent.* This is confirmed by reason: for if nothing is co-eternal with God, and if it is absurd to attribute the highest perfection to an imperfect being, *matter* must necessarily have been produced out of nothing. This could not, indeed, take place *naturally*, for every natural cause, being of finite power, requires a subject on which it may act, and which it may modify or alter. But God, as a being of infinite power, can prepare matter for himself, so that, although there existed nothing before, something should now exist by the infinite power of God. Hence he is said to "call the things which be not as though they were." (Rom. iv. 17.) This creation of all things was effected by the single word of God. He said, "Let there be light, and there was light." (Gen. i. 3.) "He spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast." (Psalm xxxiii. 9.) This was not unknown to the heathens, who represented all things as done by the nod of Jupiter; thus Maximus Tyrius: *At the nod of Jupiter the earth sprang forth, and all that it contains; the sea sprang forth, and all that it produces; the air, and all that is in it; the heaven, and all that is therein: all these things the nod of Jupiter produced.* God claims this work to himself—"I am the Lord, that maketh all things, that stretcheth forth the heavens alone, that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself," (Isaiah xliv. 24;) and by these works he distinguishes himself from all the false gods of the nations. "The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth;"—"all the gods of the nations are idols; but the Lord made the heavens." (Jer. x. 11: Psalm xcvi. 5.) And one of the heathen writers thus speaks: *He who desires to be called God, let him set about mak-*

ing a world like to this, and be able to say, This is my own.

The act of creating is so peculiar to God, that it cannot be shared with any creature; for no creature is capable of a work of infinite power, and God would give his glory to another, if he were to communicate infinite power to the creature. Nor can we conceive of any *instrument* employed in the work of creation; all being done by a single act of will on the part of the Creator. No change took place in God when creating; for he did not conceive (as it were) any *new* will, but it was only a new external work proceeding from his eternal will. A new relation indeed took place, but this relation made no change in God.

CHAPTER III.

OF THE WORKS OF CREATION.

Before we speak particularly of the works of creation, two questions are to be considered. *First*, whether the world was created in a single moment, or in six days. *Secondly*, whether each work was produced without any succession of time. To the *first* question we reply, that the narrative of Moses does not permit us to believe that the world was created in a single moment; for he expressly mentions *six days*, and ascribes to each day its particular work; and it is a proof of absurd infatuation to turn this narrative into a mere allegory. Besides, it is plainly said, that "The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep," which could not have been said, if all things had been accomplished in a single moment. Nor again could there have been any reason for the divine command, by which God enjoined the Sabbath day to be sanctified, because he created the world in six days, and rested on the seventh. Nor can the words of the son of Sirach, (Eccles. xviii. 1.) be objected; for besides that the apocryphal writings are not to be set in opposition to the canonical, the expression *in general* is in the Greek not

ἅμα, but κοινῇ, i. e. *equally* or *commonly*, so that the meaning is that all things have one common creator. With regard to the *second* question it is not so easy to determine. I incline, however, to the opinion of those who maintain that some things were created in a single moment, as those which were produced out of nothing, (for the passing from non-existence to existence does not require any delay and succession,) but that many things, which were made out of pre-existent matter, were not made without some succession of time, as the *drying* of the *earth*, and *the gathering together of the waters into one place;* for it is not conceivable that water should be *moved* from place to place in a moment.

These things being premised, let us now examine the particular works of each day, according to the narrative of Moses. But God forbid that we should be of their opinion, who maintain that the story of the creation is a mere parable, only related by Moses *because*, they say, *he was not at liberty entirely to leave out the subject of the world's origin, and the creation of things, since the surrounding nations had their cosmogonies (or stories of the world's creation) which were, for the most part, false and inimical to the true religion, which traditions the Israelities would have embraced, had they not been taught differently.* Who can endure that the earliest narrative of an inspired writer should be reckoned among the mythologies of heathens; or is it likely that Moses would deliver fables to the people, in order to divert their attention from other fables?

The works of the *first* day were the *heaven* and the *earth* (Gen. i. 1.) i. e. the whole fabric of this world, though still destitute of the beauty and splendour which it afterwards received,—the heaven which was afterwards the place of the stars, and that which is the habitation of the blessed, and the throne of the divine Majesty—the earth, surrounded with water, destitute of inhabitants, and of all that beauty which was afterwards given it; for by the words תהו ובהו (Gen. i. 2.) is meant *desolation* and *emptiness*, such as prevails in countries without inhabitants and without cultivation; and different versions are indeed given of these words, but perhaps nothing better answers to the Hebrew than the phrase used by Ovid, *rudis indigestaque moles*, (a rude and disordered mass.) But since " darkness was upon the face of the *deep*" (by this name the sacred history calls the immense bodies of waters, or the whole mass

of earth and water) it pleased God to create *light*. (Gen. i. 3.) The question is, what that light was. If we believe some, it was nothing else but that subtle matter, quick in motion, which at that time alternately enlightened both hemispheres, and afterwards was collected together into the starry globes. But we had rather confess our ignorance on this point, than come to any decision.

The works of the *second* day were, the *expanse* or *firmament*, comprehending all that space which extends from the surface of the earth to the highest point of the visible heaven. Now this was made, inasmuch as it received the form of air; and also the *separation* of the "waters above the firmament," i. e. the *clouds* and *vapours* situated in the upper regions of the air, from the "waters under the firmament," i. e. *rivers*, *fountains*, and *seas*. The firmament served to separate the waters above from those below; for although the waters are said to be *above* the firmament, we must not imagine that they were above the whole breadth of it, but only above a part of it, i. e. above the lower part of it. Some think that the *gathering together* of the *lower* waters into certain receptacles, and their separation from the earth, which was afterwards called "the dry land," as the "gathering together of the waters" was called "sea," (Gen. i. 9.) may be reckoned among the works of this day. According to this opinion the second day was not without a blessing; others are of a different opinion, and maintain that the second day was without a blessing for this reason, that what God had begun was not finished on this day; it is however of no consequence which opinion be followed.

The works of the *third* day were, according to some, that *gathering together* of the *waters*, &c. of which we have just spoken; and also the *bringing forth* of the plants and fruits of the earth, and of "trees yielding fruit:" for it was not enough for the earth or "dry land" to "appear," unless it were adorned with the plants and fruits belonging to it. God therefore was pleased to clothe the naked and destitute face of it with a kind of beautiful garment, made up of herbs, flowers, trees, and fruits of every kind, whereby provision was made for the advantage and delight of the living creatures that were to inhabit it.

The works of the *fourth* day were the creation of "lights in the firmament of heaven:" for the earth being

furnished, the heaven was also furnished, i. e. with the sun, moon, and stars. The sacred historian carefully describes the creation of these, in order that he might show that the *stars* were not deities, as the heathen believed, but only instruments by which the supreme Being benefited mankind. Several uses are ascribed to them, viz. to distinguish the times of day and night; to distinguish the seasons of the year; and by their light and heat, to act upon the things that are below. They are called *signs* because they divide the year into its seasons, *spring*, *summer*, *autumn* and *winter;* and by this means point out the times of sowing, harvest, and vintage: perhaps also they are called *signs* because they proclaimed the stated festivals among the Jews, as was the opinion of a celebrated Rabbi. But they are certainly not called *signs*, as if they were the signs of future events, such as are the subjects of *judicial astrology*. This was the opinion of the Priscillianists, the impious offspring of the Gnostics, who bound the destinies of men to their several stars. These have had, and still have, many followers. But this *astrology* must be condemned from the following considerations. 1. That this art professes to pry into the secret things of God, and presumes with impious daring to determine those futurities which are known only to God. 2. That the knowledge of the future is set forth in scripture as a mark by which the true God is distinguished from idols, (Isaiah xli. 21, 22; Dan. ii. 28.) which would not be laid down, if future events could be known from the contemplation of the stars. 3. That God often inveighs against the falsehood of this art, and the credulity of its professors, and of those who are deluded by them (Isaiah xlvii. 12, 13.) 4. That this art was acknowledged to be false, and even pernicious, by the heathen themselves; and therefore we read that Augustus banished astrologers from the city; Tiberius and Claudius banished them from Italy; Vitellius from the city, and even put them to death, as a class of men treacherous towards those in power, and deceitful towards those who trusted to them. 5. That this art was condemned by the fathers, and by all the ancients of sound principles, as appears from the works of Augustine, and the decrees of various councils. 6. That it is ridiculous, and altogether absurd, to believe that the free will of man is dependent on certain constellations, and that an astrologer, who cannot predict a heat or shower, a calm or tempest, can ascertain beforehand any

particular events in the life of mankind; such as that *Polycrates shall be crucified*; *Cyrus elevated to the throne*; *Timon shall find a treasure*; *Socrates shall die by poison*, &c. &c. &c.

The work of the *fifth* day was the bringing forth of *fishes* out of the waters, and of *fowls and birds* out of the earth; (Gen. i. 20,) and the work of the *sixth* day was the creation of terrestial animals, such as *reptiles*, or *creeping things*, *wild* and *tame beasts*, and also the creation of *man*. Thus were the works of God finished: and then he is said to have *rested*, i. e. he ceased to will the creation of any thing more, or the existence of any new form; which not being understood by the heathen, afforded them an opportunity of ridiculing the Jews, and reproaching them with worshipping a *wearied* God.

And now we must observe that all things were not created in the same manner; for there were some things, every individual of which was created in a condition that would remain perpetually fixed; others were only to preserve their species by propagation; some were created in themselves, others in their causes; as insects, meteors, &c.—some things were created out of nothing, others out of unshapen materials. We must observe also that the three persons of the adorable Trinity were concerned together in this great work. Of the *Father's* agency no one doubts; the agency of the Son is declared in John i. 3; for when he says, "The Word was in the beginning," and that "By him all things were made," he doubtless alludes to the words of Moses, in Gen. i. 1, 3. Now by that Word, by which Moses says that *light* and other things were produced, cannot be understood any *articulate word* uttered by God; for at the time that nothing existed what use could there have been for any such a word, and who could have listened to it? Nor can it be said that this word has the force of a command, by which these things sprung forth which God chose to be made, since every command which is issued is addressed to creatures capable of receiving it; but at this time there was no such creature. Neither can it be understood of some *thought of the divine mind*, or *act of the divine will*: for if Moses only meant this, there was no necessity to mention it so often: for who could doubt that God, when he made all things by his power, had previously thought concerning the work. And again, it cannot be said, that the sacred historian only meant that God was pleased not to make use of

any tools or instruments in the creation of the world; but created all things with as much facility as any one could do a work, if he were to use only a single word for that purpose, such as was meant by the man in the gospel, when he said, "Speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed." If Moses meant no more than this, why does he use so many circumlocutions? why not have said at once that all things were made by the single word of the deity; why repeat it so often, and not merely once or twice? In short, if there were no mystery in the narrative, the frequent inculcation of the same point would seem intolerable. But what that mystery is, is explained by John. With regard to the Holy Spirit, it is plain from the second verse, that he also was concerned in the creation; for it is there said, that "the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters;" now to explain this of the wind, gives a frigid and meager sense of the words. For at that time, as there was no air, so there was not any exhalation, which either by its own motion, or by any extraneous impulse, could agitate the air.

We observe once more, that, together with the world, *time* was created, which is nothing else than the duration of a created thing, or that mode of thinking, by which we measure the duration of a created thing; and therefore we cannot conceive time to have had any existence before the creation of things; since we can no more conceive of duration without the existence of created things, than we can conceive of space without body. In what part of the zodiac the sun was placed by God in the beginning of the world, and how many years have elapsed since the creation, we leave to be settled by the chronologists. We only add, that the Jews acted foolishly in not permitting the history of the creation to be read by any, except those who had arrived to years of maturity, which was with them the thirtieth year, in which a man was eligible to the priesthood; as also the beginning and the end of Ezekiel, and the Song of Solomon. Every Christian ought to contemplate these noble works of God, "Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things," (Isaiah xl. 26.) By these, as by a ladder, he ought to ascend to God, and admire his perfections; his immense power, at whose bidding all things sprang forth; his infinite goodness, to which alone the creatures are indebted for every thing; his wonderful wisdom, which has arranged all things in so

beautiful an order. "When I consider the heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained, what is man, that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man, that thou visitest him! O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all." (Psalm viii. 3, 4; civ. 24.)

CHAPTER IV.

OF THE CREATION OF ANGELS.

Since the sacred scriptures so often mention angels, we may here inquire, whether they were created by God, and when they were created; for we do not think it necessary to prove, in opposition to the Sadducees, that angels really exist. Now, that they were created, is shown by Paul, who says, "By him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers," (Col. i. 16.) Reason also confirms it; for whatever is not God, is created, since eternity is the attribute of God only. Reason also shows that they were created out of nothing, not out of any of the inferior elements, as some of the Jews dreamed; for it is absurd to maintain, that *spirits* were created out of *matter*. It cannot be said, moreover, that angels were created before the heavens and the earth, because according to the style of speaking adopted by the scriptures, nothing existed before the world, which was not eternal, and in no other way do they describe eternity to us (i. e. than by saying, "in the beginning," &c.) But on what day they were created, is altogether uncertain; it is probable on the first day, whence it is said, that when "the foundations of the earth were laid, the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy," (Job. xxxviii. 7.) Indeed the greatest part of expositors think that Moses speaks of them, when he says, "The heavens and the earth were finished, and *all the host* of them," (Gen. ii. 1.)

It appears at first sight strange, that Moses should not

have mentioned the creation of angels; but it will not appear strange, if we consider the reason, which was not, because the Israelites were prone to idolatry, (for if this had been the case of the sacred historian's silence, he never would have mentioned angels at all) nor because of the ignorance and dullness of the Jewish people, but because his object in writing was to make up a history of the church only, and therefore it was sufficient to describe its origin from the beginning of the world, and to make mention of angels, only as the nature of his plan admitted, while prosecuting the history of that church. We may only add that they were created in vast numbers, as appears from various passages of scripture, (Dan. vii. 10. Rev. v. 11, &c.) With regard to their nature, it appears from scripture, that they are "*spirits*," for they are so called, (Heb. i. 7, 14,) and *invisible*, (Col. i. 16,) consequently they are immaterial substances. Many of the ancients, and several of the schoolmen, were of a different opinion, and maintained that angels were corporeal. They are also *immortal*, which necessarily follows from their being immaterial; see Luke xx. 36, where the glorified after the resurrection are represented as unable to "die any more," because they shall be "equal unto the angels." Very great *power* and *strength* is also attributed to them; hence their mighty works, as the slaying of 185,000 men in one night, with other acts surpassing human power, though they are not miracles. It cannot indeed be denied that they appeared in human form, when they had to execute the commands of God, but no one can infer from this that they are corporeal, since they appeared in bodies, not belonging to themselves, but only assumed; but from whence they had those bodies, whether they were created out of nothing, or from some materials previously existing, or whether they took possession of the bodies of some particular men, whose souls were deprived of reason and intellect, merely for a time, that they might be unconscious of what is doing with them, it appears rash to determine; this however is certain, that the angels did not always keep possession of these bodies.

As to their knowledge, the mode in which they hold intercourse with each other, and as to their power, we think it unprofitable to speculate, nor ought we to "intrude into those things which we have not seen;" it is enough to know that their knowledge is not infinite,

that they are ignorant of many things, and know not the hearts of men, which God only knows; (1 Kings viii. 39,) they are said in scripture "not to know the day of judgment," (Mark xiii. 32,) and to know or learn many things by means of the church, (Ephes. iii. 10.) Nor have they power to do any thing without God's permission: they cannot work miracles, such as create things, raise the dead, &c., yet they can do many things which are beyond the power of human nature. The scripture attributes *speech* to angels, as in Rev. xiv. 18, where one angel speaks to another; but it is difficult to explain the meaning of this. As to their order, or degrees, we must not rashly decide any thing. *That there are thrones and dominions, principalities and powers*, says Augustine, *I firmly believe; but what is the distinction between them, let those tell us who can; if they can prove what they tell us: I confess I am ignorant of these things.* Indeed the three orders of the three hierarchies, which Dionysius the Areopagite (falsely so called) so arranged, as if he had been mingled with the angelic ranks, and had taken a survey of their then abode, sprung from the school of Plato.

They are called *angels*, because they are *sent* by the Lord (ἀγγέλλονται) to perform various services, and to execute his commands. They are also distinguished by other names; some are called *seraphim*, others *cherubim*, others *thrones*, &c., concerning which names the commentators on sacred literature may be consulted. The scripture does not speak of a plurality of archangels, but of one only, (Jude 9.) They were all created by God in holiness and innocence, but because they were created with a liability to fall, all did not continue in "their first estate." We shall speak of their fall hereafter; at present we shall only speak of good angels. Now these are called *holy*, *elect*, angels, *angels of light*, (Matt. xxv. 31; 1 Tim. v. 21; 2 Cor. xi. 14,) who never fell from the condition in which they were placed. God employs them in various services, not because he needs them, but simply because he so far deigns to honour them; and for other reasons. Their perpetual employment is to worship God, (Isaiah vi.) to stand in his presence, as attendants and ministers, to see his face, to undertake, and to execute his commandments. They ministered to Christ while upon earth, and are also of very great service to the faithful, whom they preserve and deliver from dangers, (Psalm xci. 11; xxxiv. 7,) as

in the cases of Lot, Elijah, Elisha, and Peter. God also employs them in chastising his people, and conveying their souls to heaven, as in the case of Lazarus, and also in executing judgments on the ungodly. And at the last day, Jesus will employ them in gathering together his saints, and on that occasion they will be his attendants, (Matt. xxiv. 31. 1 Thess. iv. 16.)

We must not, however, believe that every one of the faithful has a guardian angel assigned to him, which the scripture nowhere teaches, but which originated with the heathens, who assigned to each man his particular genius or demon, who was *the secret guide of his whole life.* This notion was taken up by the Jews; and some attempt to prove it from Acts xii. 15, where Luke relates, that the damsel Rhoda having said that she knew Peter's voice, the rest declared that it "was *his angel.*" All will allow that angels ought to be honoured, but no sound person will assert that they ought to be worshipped, for this is expressly condemned by Paul; "Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility, and worshipping of angels," (Col. ii. 18.) Angels themselves have refused this worship, "See thou do it not; for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren, worship God," (Rev. xix. 10; xxii. 9.) The scriptures nowhere enjoin it, but on the contrary claim religious worship for God alone, (Matt. iv. 10.) The more enlightened of the ancients wholly disapproved of it, as might easily be proved from Origen, Lactantius, Augustine, and others; and Theodoret relates that the council of Laodicea even branded with the crime of heresy, those in Phrygia, and elsewhere, who worshipped angels.

CHAPTER V.

OF THE CREATION OF MAN.

We have already said that man was created by God; but we must now treat of his creation in particular: and *first*, we observe that he was the last of God's

works; for God was pleased to build the house, and furnish it with every thing, before the inhabitant of it was introduced, who is himself a microcosm, a world in himself. *Secondly*, We observe that God proceeded to the creation of man in an extraordinary manner; for he did not simply say, *Let man be made*, as he said, *Let there be light*, but he is represented as it were deliberating or consulting, "Let us make man in our own image;" not that he needed any greater wisdom or power for the formation of man, but to point out the excellency of the intended work. Now it has been believed by Christians, from the very age of the apostles, that God in these words is not addressing angels, as some Jews maintained, nor the heaven and earth, according to others, but his only begotten Son and the Holy Ghost; hence, in a very ancient epistle, ascribed by some to Barnabas, by others to Polycarp, these words are found concerning Christ: *The Lord was pleased to suffer for our souls, though he is the Lord of the world, to whom the Father said in the beginning, Let us make man.*

In the creation of man, we must consider the distinct formation of his body and soul—for of these he consists. His body, Moses teaches us, was formed of the dust of the ground (Gen. ii. 7); not of rich materials or precious metal, but of the earth which we tread under our feet; for we pass by the dreams of the Jews, who maintained that a sort of *quintessence*, or celestial material, was used in the formation of the first man's body. He was called *Adam*, from the earth of which he was made, although the great Ludolphus maintains a different etymology of the word; for he thinks that our first parent was called Adam from his *beauty*, deriving the word from the Ethiopic root *Adama*, which signifies, *to be beautiful, elegant, pleasant.* God was pleased to create man in this way, that he might remember his origin, and thus constantly carry with him grounds for humility, nor ever set himself up against his Creator. Nor was this unknown to the heathen, who feigned that Prometheus, the son of Japhet, formed earth mixed with water into an image of the gods, who ruled all things. On this body the Lord bestowed an erect form, that man might be admonished to look down upon this earth and all earthly things, as placed beneath him, and look up to heaven, and God his Creator. No one hath ever, or will ever, enough admire the wonderful symmetry of every part of this body; whence Galen, in the very beginning of his work, *On the use of*

the parts (of the body,) could not refrain from breaking forth into the praise of the Creator. We cannot sufficiently admire the goodness of God in condescending to form the human body as it were with his own hands; whence the Christian poet Prudentius thus sings:—

> "Tantus amor terræ, tanta est dilectio nostri,
> Dignatur præpinguis humi comprendere mollem
> Divinis glebam digitis; nec sordida censet
> Hærentis massæ contagia. Jusserat ut lux
> Confieret; facta est ut jusserat. Omnia jussa
> Imperitante novas traxerunt edita formas.
> Solus homo emeruit Domini formabili dextra
> Os capere, et flabro Deitatis figmine nasci."

> *So great his love towards our human race,*
> *That with his heavenly fingers once he deign'd*
> *To handle earth's mean clods, nor deem'd his hands*
> *Defil'd with sordid clay. His mighty voice*
> *Had said, "Let there be light," and light there was;*
> *The same command had bade all other things*
> *Into existence start; to man alone*
> *This high behest was given—To draw his life*
> *From God's creating hand and breath divine.*

Into the body thus formed, God is said to have "breathed the breath of life," (Gen. ii. 7. 1 Cor. xv. 45,) that is, "a living soul," which inspiration or breathing is not to be explained literally, as if God had a mouth to breathe with, like man; but it is thus expressed to signify, that it was as easy for God to create the soul, as for man to breathe out of his mouth, (which is the interpretation of Theodoret,) and also to make it appear, that the rational soul was not produced from matter, but introduced from without into the body by God himself. The word נשמה properly signifies *breath*, but in the above-cited passage from Moses, it signifies two things, viz. breath and life, and the rational faculty which we call the soul; for these two are joined together in man. Indeed the word נשמה is sometimes taken for the soul of man, as in Prov. xx. 27. "The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts of the belly." The human soul, therefore, is of heavenly origin; thus we must think of our souls, which are given us, not by transmission, but by immediate inspiration from God. Therefore in scripture God is said to "give the spirit" and to "form the spirit of man within him," (Eccl. xii. 7. Zech. xii. 1.) Nor was this unknown to the heathens: *No origin of souls*, says Cicero, *can be*

found on the earth, for there is nothing in them which is mixed and concrete, or which appears to have been made out of earth, &c. Thus whatever this principle is, which thinks, and wills, and acts, it is heavenly and divine. God is said to have "breathed into man's nostrils," simply because by the omnipotent will of God the nostrils of Adam began immediately to send forth breath.

But the Lord God was pleased to create, not only man, but woman, to be "a help-meet for man;" he would not form her out of the clay of the earth, but out of man himself, that the husband might be more closely united to his wife, cherishing her as a part of his own body; and also to denote the superiority of the man over the woman. She was brought forth from him, while asleep; not so much that the taking of the rib from his side might be unattended with pain, but that Adam might admire the work when finished, rather than be a witness to the wonderful operation, and to the mode in which it was performed. For it is God's will, that we should contemplate his works, but it is not his will that we should be acquainted with the mode of his operations. Several mysteries on this subject are sought after by commentators, who may be consulted, and who will give you various reasons, why the woman was made out of Adam's rib, rather than out of other parts of the body, and who represent Adam asleep, as a type of Christ dead on the cross, out of whose side came forth blood and water, by which his church was formed. But these things we pass by as too refined and far-fetched.

CHAPTER VI.

OF THE IMAGE OF GOD IN MAN.

In the creation of man this thing is particularly worthy of observation, that God created him after his own image, (Gen. i. 27.) We may inquire in what this image consists. But first let it be observed, that there is a very wide difference between the manner in which Christ is the *image of God*, and that in which man was created

after this image. For Christ is called the image of God in the most complete sense, inasmuch as he most fully possesses whatever the Father possesses; which it would be impious to say of man. Now we believe that the image after which man was created, did not consist in the *participation of the divine essence*, as though the nature of man were *divinæ auræ particula*, (a particle of the divine air or spirit,) as the heathens expressed it, nor *in any bodily form*, as was the dream of the Anthropomorphites, but in these four things—in the *spirituality and immortality* of his soul—in the *qualities* of that soul—and in the *uprightness* of his understanding and will—in the *immortality* of his soul and body—in the *dominion* which he had over the inferior creatures.

That these particulars may be clearly proved, let us see, *first*, whether the image of God can be said to consist in these things; and *secondly*, whether these things really belonged to the first man. The *first* is easily proved; for this is the general argument—the image of God must consist in that which makes us like God; now nothing makes us more like unto God, than *spirituality*, *immortality*, *holiness*, *righteousness*, *authority*, and *dominion*. *Again*, the same image was bestowed on man in his natural state, which is renewed in us by grace, and will be perfected in glory; for the "new man" is said, by Paul, to be "renewed after the image of him that created him," (Col. iii. 10.) Now the image which is restored by grace, and which will be perfected in glory, consists in "knowledge, righteousness, and holiness," as all will allow. Nor will it be useless to mark the force of the word *renewed* (ἀνακαινούμενον;) for *renovation* supposes that which is renewed to have existed before, but to have decayed through age, or to have been obliterated, or altogether destroyed. As to *dominion*, we need not say much to prove that the image of God consists also in this; it is plain from what God adds, after he had said, "Let us make man in our image," viz. "And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea," &c.; unless we prefer saying that *dominion* is the *consequence* of God's image; for some translate the passage, not "*and* let them have," but, "*but* let them have dominion." It is plain at any rate, from 1 Cor. xi. 7, where the man, on account of the authority granted him over the woman, is called "the image and glory of God."

This being proved, let us now examine, *secondly*, whether all these things are applicable to the first man;

and this we will prove in each particular. 1. That his soul was *spiritual*, not *extended*, (i. e. taking up space as a body) appears from this single argument; that it is impossible for any thing *extended to think or to possess thought.* Indeed, as philosophers have rightly observed, only those things come under the idea of *thought* which take place in us while we are conscious of their taking place. Now it cannot be conceived how a *body* can be capable of this kind of action or passion, and be conscious of it: for we do not observe any other motion in bodies than what is *local*, and we can plainly conceive no other effect of this motion, except the separation of the parts of the body, the variation of its figure, and the change of its situation. Truly, if any one conceives a body to be capable of thought, I would fain ask him, whether the thoughts can be round or square, or of any particular colour! 2. That the soul of the first man was immortal, and consequently the souls of other men, is proved by many arguments. *First*, from scripture, from Eccl. xii. 7. "Then shall the dust return to the earth, and the spirit shall return to God who gave it;" and from those passages in which Paul expresses his desire "to depart, to be absent from the body, to be with Christ, to be present with the Lord," (Phil. i. 23; 2 Cor. v. 6, 8.) Also from Christ's argument against the Sadducees, in which he quotes, "I am the God of Abraham," &c. to show that God is not the God of the dead, but of the living;" which argument incontestably proves the immortality of the soul: for if the soul died with the body, God would be the God of the dead only. *Secondly*, it is proved from reason: for if the soul died, this would happen, either because its parts were separated from each other, or because it destroyed itself, or was destroyed by some other created being, or was annihilated by God himself. None of these cases can be affirmed; for the soul has no parts, being of a spiritual nature: nor can it be conceived how the soul could destroy itself, or be destroyed by any other created thing. Nor can it by any argument be proved, that God is willing to annihilate the soul; on the contrary it can be proved that he is unwilling to do so; for since his justice requires that the good should be rewarded, and the wicked punished, and yet by the all-wise counsel of God this is not always done in the present life, another life must necessarily be expected, in which the distribution of rewards and punishments shall take place. Yet this would not be

the case, if the soul were annihilated by God. Not to mention what modern philosophers observe, that no argument or example can prove that any substance is capable of being reduced to nothing. To which we may add that all religion is overthrown, if the same end is reserved for the godly and ungodly as for the beasts; and that there is in all mankind a natural desire for immortality, which it is highly improbable has been implanted by the Deity to no purpose. This immortality of the soul was acknowledged by all the wiser heathens, such as Socrates, Plato, Cicero, &c.

With regard to the *third* particular, viz. that man was endued with what divines call *original righteousness*, and which consists in the light and purity of the understanding, the holiness of the will, the regularity of the senses and passions, and an entire inclination to what is good; this is proved from the consideration, that whatever God created was good, and indeed of such goodness as was necessary to the end for which all things were designed. Now since man was designed for the glory of God, for his knowledge and worship, it was necessary that he should be created with such goodness, as would render him capable of knowing God, and glorifying him. Such goodness therefore must have comprised *wisdom*, *holiness*, and *righteousness*. This is further evident from his being created in order to exercise dominion over the other creatures, which he could not have done, had he not been endued with wisdom and holiness. It is also confirmed by the positive testimony of scripture, "God made man upright," (Eccl. vii. 29.) Now concerning this righteousness be it observed, that it was called *natural*, because it was created with man, and was so necessary to the perfection of man in a state of innocence, that without it he could not have been in that state. Again: when we say that man was endued with *wisdom*, we do not imagine that he was *omniscient*—for we doubt not that he was ignorant of many things—but we must on this head avoid the two extremes. On the one hand we must not ascribe so great a knowledge to the first man, as to maintain that all sciences were known to him. Wonderful things are mentioned by the schoolmen concerning Adam's knowledge, just as if they had heard him teach, or had read books written by him. On the other hand we must not reckon him among the dull and ignorant. We must hold the medium, and believe that he was endued with

so much wisdom as was necessary in the state in which God had placed him, and that he had the capacity of acquiring further knowledge by *reason*, *experience*, and *revelation*. We must also remark that he was not endued with such righteousness as rendered him altogether *impeccable*, or incapable of sinning, but only with that which rendered him able to preserve himself from sinning.

With respect to the *fourth* particular, viz. that the *whole* man was immortal, (*body* as well as *soul*,) is abundantly proved from those passages in which it is said, that "by sin death entered into the world," that "death is the wages of sin," (Rom. v. 12; vi. 23,) and from Gen. ii. 17; iii. 19, where God threatens death as the punishment of sin. But here it must be observed, that man had not that immortality which is applicable only to God, or that which the blessed enjoy in heaven, which will be an absolute impossibility of dying, and for the preservation of which no means are required. For we allow that man, by reason of the earthly materials of which he was formed, had in himself the possibility of dying; but he was said to be immortal, because he had the power of *not dying;* he had no seed or matter of disease within him, and he possessed most certain exemption from actual death, by the goodness of God, in the event of his not sinning. This was maintained by one of the ancient councils, which condemned those who affirmed, that *the first man was created mortal, so that, whether he sinned or not, he was to die bodily, not through the desert of sin, but through the law of his nature.* Once more, it appears from the very words of God, that *dominion* was given to man over the rest of the creation,—"Multiply and replenish the earth, and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea," &c. (Gen. i. 28,) whence Adam is said to have given the living creatures their names, (Gen. ii. 19,) which names, if we take Philo's opinion, *were not improper, nor unsuitable, but exactly expressive of the peculiar properties of the subjects, so that the nature of each could be known as soon as the name given to it was pronounced.*

We have said that Adam was not *impeccable;* it follows, therefore, that he had a *free will* in his state of innocence. But let us first inquire what is meant by *free* will: by it we understand nothing else than *the power of doing what we please, under the guidance of our own judgment and counsel, so as not to feel ourselves impelled by any external influence.* To this liberty is

opposed that *physical or natural necessity*, which is seen in natural agents, that are by the law of their nature determined or influenced towards one object, as fire to burn; and also the *necessity of compulsion*, which arises from an external agent, the subject of that compulsion not contributing any thing towards it, on the contrary resisting it, as if a man were to be dragged by force to an idol, or to prison; but to this liberty is not opposed that *necessity of dependence*, by which all the creatures depend on God, and from which a rational creature cannot be exempted; nor that *rational necessity*, which arises from the deliberate judgment of the mind; for instance, when I necessarily embrace what appears to me the chief good; for although I do this necessarily, it is not done the less freely. In order that any *agent* may be said to be free, it is enough that he act *voluntarily*, and with *judgment*, which evidently appears in the case of God himself, who is a very free and independent Being, and yet is necessarily determined to what is good: and the same is the case with the angels and glorified spirits. *Liberty* therefore does not consist in *indifference*, for otherwise God himself would not be free, and the more man was determined to good, i. e. the more perfect he became, the less free would he be, which is absurd.

From these observations, then, we easily conclude, that Adam possessed *free will*, since this liberty is the essential property of a rational creature: it being impossible to conceive of a rational creature without the power of doing any thing under the guidance of a deliberate judgment; indeed to act *from reason* is always to act *freely*. It appears also from hence, that this liberty of Adam did not consist in *independence*, as though he were at his own disposal; for as a creature, he was always to depend on his Creator, and upon the pleasure of that Creator: this liberty simply consisted in his acting freely, and with judgment, without being impelled by any external agent. Nor did his liberty consist in *indifference*, as though his will were equally balanced between an inclination to good, and an inclination to evil, for such indifference would have been sin, and therefore Adam would have been corrupt from the very first, since we cannot without sin be equally inclined to good and to evil; and yet to say that Adam was created by God in a corrupt state, is to make God the author of sin, which is impious. We cannot however deny that

Adam was *mutable;* he was placed in such a state, that he could stand or fall, sin or not sin; but this mutability cannot be called liberty; it does not deserve to be honoured with so distinguished an appellation; it was a kind of appendage to Adam's liberty, which so peculiarly belonged to *him*, that it has never again been found in any man. Let us not therefore confound this mutability with indifference; for it is possible for a man to be placed in such a state, as that he can sin, or not sin, although he should always continue holy, and without any corruption; on the contrary, no one can be said to be *indifferent* to (or equally inclined) *to good* and *to evil*, without being corrupt.

CHAPTER VII.

OF THE COVENANT OF NATURE.

We have proved that man was created after the image of God. We also do not doubt that God entered into a *covenant* with him, although this is not expressly intimated in the scripture, unless we admit, as evidence, that passage in Hosea vi. 7, where it is said, "They, like men, have transgressed the covenant," i. e. as it is rendered by some, "They, like *Adam*, have," &c. The Hebrew word signifying *covenant* (ברית) is derived, either from ברא, which in *pihel* signifies to *cut* or *divide*, because animals were thus cut, when covenants were thus entered into, and those who covenanted were accustomed to pass between the divided parts of the victim; or from ברא, signifying not only to *create*, but also to *ordain* or *appoint*, in the same sense as the word κτίζειν among the Hellenist Jews, (hence Peter calls the authority appointed by man, κτίσις, an *ordinance*, 1 Peter ii. 13;) or from ברה, to *choose*. It matters not which etymology be adopted; only, we may observe, the word ברית is sometimes taken for an unchangeable decree concerning any thing, as in Jer. xxxiii. 20; though it strictly means, *a mutual agreement upon something between two parties*. The Greeks use the word διάθήκη, which sometimes denotes a *testament*, as Budæus also proves from several passages in

Isocrates, Æschines, Demosthenes, and others; sometimes it denotes a *law;* thus, as Grotius observes, the followers of Orpheus and Pythagoras called the rules of life, presented to their disciples, διαθῆκαι; but it frequently denotes *agreement*, or *covenant;* hence Hesychius renders it by the word συνωμοσια.

It is true, that, speaking strictly, there cannot be any covenant between God and man, because there is no proportion between God and man, and between the goodness of the one, and the duty of the other; because also man is bound without any covenant to pay obedience to God, and is not able of himself to contribute any thing towards it; nor does God owe any thing to his creature, or in any way has need of his creature. But God, under the influence of pure kindness, was pleased by means of a covenant, to invite into communion with himself, and by this bond of love and mutual agreement, more effectually to win over his creature, who was already subject, and owed every thing to him. Now in this covenant we must consider who were the contracting parties, and what was the covenant itself. The contracting parties were God and man; *God*, as *Creator* and *Lord*, who, as an all-wise Being, cannot disregard his creature in any way, cannot govern it, except in a manner agreeable to his own nature, and by means of suitable laws, and cannot but love and reward it, while discharging its duty—and *man*, considered as *upright*, and therefore having power to perform the duty enjoined, considered also as the *first* man, the head and chief of the human race, and therefore representing the whole of that race which was to descend from him.

With regard to the covenant itself, we must observe, what was the duty required by God; what was the promise made to the performance of that duty; what was the threat denounced against the neglect of it. Now the duty consisted in all that *knowledge* of God which could be derived from contemplating the divine work, and from revelation, as much as could be acquired by a perfectly upright mind; but especially in *obedience* to the law of God, both the natural law, which was engraven on man's heart, and any special commandments, which God might choose to impose (such as was the command to abstain from the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil;) in short, such an obedience was required, as was *true and sincere* (having

respect not merely to *some*, but to *all and each* of God's commands) *constant* and *persevering*, *perfect* and *complete* in all its parts. Moreover, man had sufficient power given him by his Creator to perform this obedience. The *threatening* denounced against the neglect of this obedience, was *death*, (Gen. ii. 17,) by which we understand the death of the *body*, (Gen. iii. 19,) together with all the miseries and calamities of life preceding; the death of the *soul*, on its separation from God, and from communion with him, (Ephes. iii. 1,) and *eternal death*, consisting of the most dreadful torments both of soul and body. With regard to the *promise* of the covenant, though it is not expressly laid down, it is sufficiently clear from the threatening of death, which is opposed to it; for although God owes nothing to his creature, yet as the whole scripture sets him forth to us as slow to anger and abundant in mercy, it is not at all probable, that God denounced upon man the threat of eternal punishment, and at the same time gave him no promise. But if any one wonder why God should speak about punishment, and be silent concerning reward, we may give this as the probable reason of it, viz. that innocent Adam needed to have *distinct* mention made to him both of *sin* forbidden, and of *death* its consequence, seeing that in his upright state he was ignorant of death and sin, but it was not so necessary to make mention to him of the *life* which was to be bestowed upon him, on condition of his persevering in holiness; for he already enjoyed a most blessed life, from which he could very easily judge of the life that was to come. We must therefore form a judgment of the *reward*, from the *punishment*, and therefore, as the former comprehended all evil, especially eternal death, so the latter contained all that was good, particularly eternal life, and the most intimate communion with God in unchangeable holiness. This is further confirmed from the covenant of nature being the same as the covenant of works, as we shall see hereafter. Now the covenant of works promised eternal life, saying, "Do this, and live."

We cannot believe that Adam would, if he had persevered, have enjoyed the same life which he already had; it is far more probable, that God promised him something greater and better, after the course of his obedience was finished, than what he already possessed, otherwise he could not have been said to have given him any reward at all. Now this covenant is called the cove-

nant of *nature*, because it was founded on the nature of man, as it was created by God, and upon the strength of that nature; it is called also the *legal* covenant, because the condition required on man's part, was the keeping of the law of nature; and it was called the covenant of *works*, because it was founded on works to be performed by Adam. It had no mediator, since man was perfectly righteous, and free from sin; and being such, he needed no mediator. But since in every covenant there are usually some external symbols or signs, to remind the contracting parties of their duty, and to set before them the promises of the covenant, it pleased God to deal with man in this form under the first covenant; and the visible sign, by which God chose to confirm his faith, was the *tree of life*, which stood in the midst of the Paradise, where Adam had been placed by his Maker.

Concerning this *Paradise* (the word is of Persian origin,) I do not intend to say much, nor to inquire in what part of the earth it was, whether in Palestine, or in the neighbouring country of Damascus, or in any part of Southern Mesopotamia, or of Babylon; what was its circuit and extent, and what was the exact course of the rivers Pison and Gihon. Let it be enough to observe, that this Paradise no longer exists, although it is uncertain what occasioned its ruin and desolation, whether it was fire sent from heaven, or the neglect of cultivation after man's banishment from it, or the waters of the deluge, or all these causes together. We may observe also that the fame of Paradise was known among the heathen: for what else does Homer mean by *the gardens* of Alcinoüs, and Plato by *the garden* of Jupiter? What else is meant by *the gardens* of the Hesperides, which were, according to Pliny, the admiration of the ancients? And very possibly the ἡδονὴ (*pleasure*) of the Greeks was derived from the עדן (Eden) of the Hebrews. But what we are most concerned to notice is, that there were two remarkable trees in this Paradise; the one was *the tree of life*, so called because it was the symbol of life already received from God, and of life that was to be received and enjoyed in heaven, and not because it had any power of giving life to man, or bestowing immortality upon him, like the fabled *ambrosia* of the heathen deities; although it is possible, that the fruit of it was very good, and excellent food for the preservation of animal life. It is disputed, whether this tree was a figure of Christ: now Christ is undoubtedly the true tree

of life, from which we derive the life that is heavenly, which is in the midst of the Church, as the other was in the midst of Paradise, which bears the most abundant fruit, for the supply of the twelve tribes of Israël, i. e. all the members of the Church, which bears that fruit "every month" in the year, i. e. perpetually, and whose leaves, ever green and fair, "are for the healing of the nations." The other tree was the *tree of the knowledge of good and evil*, so called, not because its fruit had any wonderful power of inspiring or increasing knowledge, nor because Satan gave this name to it, but from the lamentable event, inasmuch as by the eating of it man actually experienced what good and evil were; how much good he had lost: and how much evil he had brought upon himself. But what that tree was, whether a fig-tree, or an apple-tree, or any other, it is vain curiosity to inquire; nor is it altogether necessary to examine, whether this tree was a sacrament or not; some maintain the negative, because they say, sacraments were given to be used, but the use of this tree was forbidden to man, and because sacraments are signs of a blessing, which blessing they seal, but the use of this tree brought a curse. Others maintain the affirmative, because, they contend, the use of some sacraments consists in contemplation, as the rainbow, and because it is not inconsistent with the nature of sacraments, to be signs or seals of death to those who do not rightly use them.

CHAPTER VIII.

OF PROVIDENCE IN GENERAL.

We have treated of the creation of all things. Now we are not to imagine that God left those things he had created to themselves, and that he has no regard at all to the affairs of this lower world, as was the opinion of Epicurus, who imagined to himself a kind of Deity, *having no trouble himself, nor giving it to any other.* We must rather believe that God preserves, governs, and

directs to certain ends, every thing which he has created. *There is nothing*, says Augustine, *in this vast and immense commonwealth, which is not either commanded, or permitted, by edicts from the court of the Supreme Governor.* This care over all things we call *Providence*, concerning which we must first inquire, whether it really exists, i. e. whether there is a Providence. Now this is proved by many arguments.

The *first* is derived from the nature of God, as an all-perfect Being; for who would call that Being perfect, who should sit inactive at the helm of the universe, and give up every thing to the direction of the creatures? At least, who would not conceive of something more perfect than such a Being as this? The *second* argument is derived from the nature of the creatures; for since they were produced out of nothing, they would relapse into nothing, if they were not preserved by the same power which formed them, nor would the world continue for a moment, did not God pervade all, as the poet says, *Terrasque tractusque maris, cœlumque profundum* (the seas, the lands, and the lofty skies.) For the *essence* of the creatures does not involve in it any idea of *existence;* and thus because they exist at one moment, it does not follow that they will exist at the next moment. And this was the reason why the author of *the Book of the World* (Philo), compares the Deity to those stones, which the Greeks call ὀμφαλοι, and the Latins *Umbilici*, which keep firm together the whole mass of arched work; thus God supports and holds together every part of the universe. The *third* argument is drawn from the wonderful order and harmony of the creatures; for who can believe that so great a number of creatures, of so many different natures, could continue for so many ages, without the special care of a deity? Who can believe that the courses of the stars, and the changes of the seasons, and other things of the same nature, could continually revolve in an immutable order, without the watchful eye, and the powerful hand, of Him who ordained them? The *fourth* argument is taken from various passages of scripture, where it is said, that he "upholdeth all things by the word of his power"—that "he giveth to all life, breath, and all things," and "in him we live, and move, and have our being"—that he "preserveth man and beast"—"giveth to all their meat in due season," that he "sends forth the rain, and snow," &c., governs the winds, the sea, the rivers, takes care

of "sparrows" and "lilies," forms men in the womb; with other things of this kind. The *fifth* argument is derived from the conviction of conscience; for if every thing is given up to chance or fortune (as it is called), and there is no such thing as Providence, why is conscience alarmed at the remembrance of sin? Why do the wicked *turn pale at the sight of lightning, or at the hearing of thunder, and start with terror at the first noise of the heavens?*

We must therefore allow a Providence; since to deny it, is to deny the very being of God, and to overthrow all religion. Many of the heathens acknowledged it; thus Lucilius Balbus, a Stoic, is introduced by Cicero, speaking thus—*If any one were to enter a house, or school, or forum, and to behold the method, the order, and the government of all things in it, he could not imagine that these things were done without a cause, but would believe that there was some one who presided and directed, and to whom obedience was paid: mmch more then, in such great operations and vicissitudes, in the movements of things so numerous and so important, in which nothing has ever been false for an immense series of ages past, is it necessary to determine, that such mighty operations of nature are governed by some divine mind.* This perhaps was the reason, why πρόνοια (*providence*) was worshipped as a goddess in the isle of Delos, and was said to have assisted Latona at her labour; by which was signified, that *nature*, which was represented by Latona, could do nothing without *providence*, as a midwife, to assist her in her labour, and bringing forth of her children. The philosopher Zeno defined God to be, *an immortal being, who presided over the world, and the things in the world.*

There is no necessity to doubt concerning providence, merely because of the many inequalities which we see in this world. They appear indeed to be unequal and irregular, but they are not really so, as we should see, if we were allowed to penetrate the secrets of the Most High. But it is not our province to pry into his designs, or to measure them by the narrow rule of our own understanding. How, indeed, is it possible for finite mortals to comprehend all the actions of an infinite Being? All that we have to conclude from this is, that God has not been pleased to discover the ends of all that he does, although they are most holy, and most worthy of an all-perfect Being; and we ought far less to wonder at this,

since even earthly sovereigns do many things, the reasons of which are unknown to us. It is admirably said by Salvian—*I can indeed most reasonably and deliberately say, I am totally ignorant of the secret counsel of the Deity. The saying of the divine oracle is enough for me to the establishing of this point—God says that all things are seen, governed, and judged by him. But do not ask of me, why God thus does the things of which we are speaking. I am a man—I do not understand, I dare not investigate the secrets of God, indeed I dread to attempt it; moreover, it is a kind of sacrilegious rashness, to desire to know more than you are permitted to know. Let it be enough for you that God plainly declares that all things are ruled and governed by him.* Excellently also Thomas Bradwardine (Archbishop of Canterbury): *Blush, O philosopher, proud of thy knowledge, and no longer think it right to esteem God so little a Being, as that thou, little as thou art, canst comprehend the whole of him in thy puny mind, and search into all his secrets, and fully conceive of him as he altogether is.* We observe further, that it is no objection to a Providence that it often appears "to be ill with the righteous," and "to be well with the wicked," or that the innocent are often involved in calamities with the guilty; this will be easily explained, by considering that many persons under the mask of piety conceal an ungodly heart, that many things appear to be evil, which are really good, that many are believed to be good, which are not so, that no one is innocent in the sight of God, that God often delivers his own people from the calamities with which he overwhelms the wicked, as in the cases of Noah, Lot, and the Christians before the destruction of Jerusalem, that God frequently punishes the wicked in this life. Finally, we must not imagine that it takes away any thing from the felicity of God, to be occupied in the government of the world; since he performs every thing by the single act and motion of his will; hence he is called by Augustine *the God who governs the world without labour, and upholds it without burden.*

CHAPTER IX.

OF THE OBJECTS AND ACTS OF PROVIDENCE.

This Providence overrules all things, every single thing, even the most minute, in heaven and in earth, things certain and contingent, good and evil. The wise men among the Jews, according to Maimonides, maintained that God nourished and supported every thing, from the horn of the unicorn to the eggs of the meanest and vilest insect. Among the Arabian Mahomedans, there was a sect, as the same Maimonides relates, which believed that God superintended the fall of every leaf, and the creeping of every ant. Nor was this doctrine entirely unknown to the heathens, although some among them limited providence to the sphere of the moon, and maintained that the gods took care of great, but neglected small things; but far different was the opinion of Socrates, who is said to have maintained, that it is known to the Deity even when we *move* ourselves. There is, in fact, nothing so mean and inconsiderable, which God does not know and direct. What can be meaner than the hairs of the head, the flowers and grass of the field; than ravens, quails, locusts, insects, &c? And yet the scripture teaches us that the providence of God is over such as these. "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing, and one of them shall not fall to the ground without your Father? But the very hairs of your head are all numbered," (Matt. x. 29, 30.) "He watereth the hills from his chambers; the earth is satisfied with the fruit of thy works. He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man, that he may bring forth food out of the earth," (Psalm civ. 13, 14.) "Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap, which neither have storehouse nor barn, and God feedeth them," (Luke xii. 24.) We need not quote any more passages.

Nothing is so contingent or accidental, as not to fall under the Providence of God. What more accidental than the death of one man, killed unintentionally by another? Yet this is attributed to God, (Exod. xxi. 13.) What more a matter of chance than *lots?* Yet is the de-

cision of them ascribed to God—"The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord," (Prov. xvi. 33.) Away therefore with any such representation, as that of fortune blindfolded, and standing on a wheel, directing the affairs of mankind. Nothing also so depends on the human will, as not to be under the direction of Providence. "The preparations of the heart in man are from the Lord." (Prov. xvi. 1.) "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water; he turneth it whithersoever he will." (Prov. xxi. 1.) Examples of this could be shewn in Esau, the Egyptians, Balaam, Saul, and others. That this Providence also is concerned in evil actions, the scripture declares in those passages in which it is said, that "the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart," (Exod. iv. 21,) and "gave up the wives of David unto his neighbour." (2 Sam. xii. 11.) Yea, that even "*God did* (by Absalom) before all Israel, what David did secretly," (v. 12,) that God "commanded Shimei to curse David," (2 Sam. xvi. 10,) that "he mingled a perverse spirit in the midst of the Egyptians," (Isaiah xix. 14,) and "put a lying spirit in the mouth of the prophets," (1 Kings xxii. 23,) &c.

Upon the whole, we must not think it strange that God should order and direct the least things; for if it was not beneath God's majesty to create the least and meanest, why should it be beneath his glory to preserve them? even as it is not beneath the glory of the sun to cast the rays of his light upon the foulest places. Besides, if God neglected the least and meanest things, he would neglect all things, because all things are very little and mean in comparison with himself. Nor must we imagine that Paul in 1 Cor. ix. 9, *denies* that "God taketh care for oxen," for it is plain from an attentive examination of the passage, that Paul's intention was to shew that God, in commanding by the law that "the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn should not be muzzled," did not so much desire to shew his regard to oxen, as to shew that the greater care was to be bestowed on men who labour faithfully in their calling, inasmuch as they were far superior to all oxen. In what way God orders things contingent, and things that depend on the will of man, without infringing on their liberty, and how he orders things that are sinful, without injuring his own character, will be explained hereafter.

With regard to the *acts* or *operations* of Providence there are two, the *preservation* and the *government* of

all things. The scripture teaches us the former—"Thou, O Lord, preservest man and beast," (Psalm xxxvi. 6.) "In him we live, and move, and have our being." (Acts xvii. 28.) "Thou openest thy hand, they are filled with good; thou hidest thy face, they are troubled; thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust; thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created, and thou renewest the face of the earth." (Psalm civ. 28—30.) Two things prove the necessity of this preservation, *first*, the weakness of the creatures, which cannot exist of themselves, even for a moment, for from their existing at the present, it does not follow that they will exist for the future. The ideas of self-existence, and self-preservation, stand or fall together; and therefore, as no finite beings can exist of themselves, so none can be preserved by themselves. *Secondly*, their dependence upon God; for being dependent on him, it is impossible to conceive how they could exist a moment without his preservation; otherwise they would be for that moment independent.

Now this preservation must not be conceived, as if God merely permitted to exist, or abstained from destroying; but it is an act of God's will, by which it pleases him that the creature should remain in the state in which it was created. Whence it has been justly observed, that this preservation is a kind of *perpetual creation;* for by the same will by which he created all things, God preserves all things. *Creation* differs from *preservation* only in this respect, that, when the existence of the thing follows the will of God, it is called *creation;* when the same thing continues by the same will in its existence, it is called *preservation.* Whence it follows, that, if God chose to annihilate any creature, it would be enough for him to command it to exist only for a certain time, after which it would cease to exist, not by any new act on the part of God, but simply by a cessation of the former act. All these things would be easily conceived by us, if we would form a just and proper idea of the divine Being; but because men are in the habit of forming an idea of the relation which God bears to his own world, as they do of the relation which an architect bears to a house built by him, they imagine that the creatures, when they have come out of the hands of God, no longer need his assistance, any more than the house needs the assistance of the architect after it has been completed by him; whereas they are completely in error on this sub-

ject, by comparing things that are widely different. For the architect contributes nothing to the building, but the just and proper arrangement of its parts; he does not form those parts; he finds them made, he does not make them; and therefore it is quite natural, that those parts which do not derive their existence from the architect, should be able to exist without him, according to the law of nature. If we may compare human things with divine, I should prefer comparing the creatures to the light which continually proceeds from the sun; though here the comparison will in many respects fail us.

The second act of Providence is *government*, which is that operation of the divine will, by which he wisely orders all things, and not only concurs or co-operates (if we may use such a word, though not strictly proper), with second causes, and the operation of them, but also directs every thing to its peculiar end, and makes every thing the instrument of his own glory. That God does thus *govern*, as well as *preserve* all things, is proved from all those passages of scripture, in which the operations of second causes are ascribed to God; which would be said without reason, if the whole nature of Providence consisted only in the preservation of things. Instances are innumerable; for example, God is said to have sent Joseph into Egypt, (Gen. xiv. 7,)—to have "the king's heart in his hand, turning it withersoever he will," (Prov. xxi. 1,)—to make use of the ungodly as an axe, a saw, a rod, a staff, &c. (Isaiah x. 15, &c.) Now such instruments do not work of themselves, except a man apply his hand to them; and all these expressions would be very tame indeed, if they denoted nothing else than the preservation of certain powers in the creature. The same point is evident also from the consideration, that the creatures are no less dependent upon God for their *operation*, than for their *existence*, and need his power no less for the former than for the latter, which will very plainly appear by observing, that there are many creatures whose very essence consists in operation; as for instance, a *spirit*, whose essence consists in *thought*. Now how can we conceive that a spirit constantly needs the concurrence of the Deity to the preservation of its essence, and does not need this concurrence to the production of its thoughts, seeing that its essence and its thoughts are so intimately connected, that the one cannot subsist without the other?

But since the subject of the divine *concurrence* or *co-operation* is very difficult, we will i lustrate it by several propositions. *First*, this co-operation must not be considered as some power which passes from God into the creatures; it is nothing more than the will of God, by which it pleases him that second causes should operate at a particular time, under particular circumstances. For God does every thing by a single act of his will—*he spake and it was done.* *Secondly*, the motion which is produced in the creatures, and in second causes, by the will of God, is not a motion different from that of second causes. For we must not conceive the operation of God in concurring, and the operation of the second cause which admits that concurrence, to be two different actions, like those of two persons who draw the same rope. On the contrary, the operation or motion which is produced by the first cause in the second, is the same with the operation of the second cause—they are one and the same. For co-operation is nothing else but the acting of second causes, produced in them, not by their own power independent of God, but by the power of that act of his will, by which he says, as it were, *I will;* whence alone it is that this action is produced by that creature. *Thirdly*, this co-operation is not merely *general* and *indifferent*, so as to be directed to its particular end by the second cause, as some think, who illustrate their position by the example of the sun, which indifferently concurs with the things beneath it, according to their nature, so that the indifferent and general operation of this luminary is directed to its particular ends, by the action of those inferior things; whence it comes to pass, that the action of the sun at one and the same time hardens some things, melts others, whitens these, and blackens those. Now if this position were true, then the first cause would be dependent on the second, not the second on the first. Also the decree of God would be rendered uncertain, and his prescience fallible, since they would both depend on the changeable will of human beings. Further, the creature would be more active than God, for a particular direction is superior to a general co-operation. Moreover in this case, God would not be the cause of good, more than of evil. *Fourthly*, we can form no conception as to the nature of this *general* and *indifferent co-operation* of God, allowing it to exist. It must have some subject, and this can be no other than the will; now the co-operation, which is in

this will, either produces a fitness to act, or the act itself. Whichever is said, that co-operation cannot be indifferent. *Fifthly*, the divine co-operation prevents *our* will, which is proved by considering that the acts of the divine will precede those of our will, since God hath decreed from eternity what should be done in time, and that our will being of its own nature indifferent to any motion, the event or result could not be predicted with certainty, unless the will were influenced by God. *Lastly*, this co-operation by no means destroys the liberty of the creature, as will be shewn presently, when we treat of the *manner* in which all things are ordered by Providence.

CHAPTER X.

OF THE MODE OF DIVINE PROVIDENCE.

The manner in which Providence governs all things, differs according to the nature of its objects, some of which are *inanimate*, others *animate*, and others *rational* beings. With respect to the two former, there is no difficulty, seeing that God bestows upon them such a nature, endued with certain properties, that they necessarily produce particular effects, according to their several objects, as *the sun shines, fire burns*, &c. Thus we easily conceive how they are governed by God, who preserves and supports their essence and the power given them by creation, and furnishes them with suitable objects to which their powers are devoted. As it regards human beings there is a greater difficulty; but thus much we may observe, — that there are *three* kinds of actions which are done in man, viz. *natural*, *animal*, and *rational*; with the two former God is concerned in the same manner as with inanimate things, or as with the brute creation, although it must be allowed, that God watches over human affairs in a particular manner. But the case is different with *rational* actions: with regard to these we may observe, that there are

three sorts of them, as done by man, viz. *indifferent*, *good*, and *evil*,—with the first God is concerned in these different respects, viz. he preserves man's nature and his powers of action—he causes objects to be presented to him—he removes other objects, which might prevent him from directing his attention to those that are set before him—he gives these objects such properties or qualities, as may influence man to act in this or that manner —he acts upon man's body and mind, and influences to action either both, or one of them, according as it is necessary. As to *good* actions, we believe the case to be nearly the same. For God preserves man's nature and his power of doing what is good—he presents an object tending to call this power into action—commands him by his word thus to act—works on man's mind by his Spirit, correcting its depraved inclination, and rendering it capable of acting well—removes out of the way whatever could divert man from his good intention—influences the powers of the soul to act—and fills the mind with such pleasure and satisfaction, that it perseveres till it has accomplished its work. With respect to *evil* actions, we shall treat the subject in a separate chapter.

Now if it be inquired, in what way divine Providence can consist with human liberty? we reply, that although we were ignorant of this, yet we should not the less believe that Providence governs us, and that yet we are free; for we certainly know that we are dependent on God, and are equally conscious of our own freedom. We can also reconcile Providence with our own liberty by considering, that the former influences second causes in a manner agreeable to their nature, and does not take away from any of them their own particular mode of action; it does not force the will to act,—does not *physically* determine it, as it does an inanimate thing which is without will and judgment, but influences the will rationally, in a manner that is agreeable to its nature. Again, should it be asked, how the doctrine of a Providence is consistent with the contingency of events, I reply at once, that a necessary event, with reference to second causes, is not properly contingent, since God has decreed or determined all things. But if any thing appears contingent to us, it is because we do not know what God has decreed, nor what connexion the things which *we* call contingent have with other things.

Besides, the manner of divine Providence varying according to the difference of its objects, it varies also in

these several respects. Sometimes God acts in the government of the world, without the instrumentality of second causes. Sometimes he employs second causes, animate or inanimate, angelic or human, not because he needs their services, but of his own good pleasure. Sometimes, also, he works according to the nature and powers which he has bestowed on things by creation, and according to the order he originally appointed; at other times he does not observe that order, but either suspends it, or performs miraculous works, i. e. which exceed the powers of nature.

CHAPTER XI.

OF THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD OVER SIN.

That the Providence of God is concerned with sin, we cannot be ignorant; for it is beyond all doubt, that nothing takes place in the world without the knowledge and will of the Omniscient and Omnipotent Being; but in what way it is thus concerned, is a point of the greatest difficulty. Far be it from us to think with the Manichees, and other ancient heretics, that God is the author of sin; much less to say with Homer's Agamemnon, in order to excuse our guilt—*I am not the author* (of it,) *but Jupiter;* hence Jupiter is represented as complaining of mankind—*They say* that *evil is of us.* For this is both contrary to the character of God, as a most holy Being, and to the scripture, which teaches us that God perfectly hates sin. *How could he indeed,* as Basil observes, *be the author of those things, of which he is the revenger? for God would not, nor could he with justice, punish what he himself did and approved.* But that we may form some just conceptions of the manner in which God is concerned with sin, we shall consider sin in reference to its *beginning*, its *progress*, and its *end;* for in these three relations is it connected with Providence.

With regard to the *beginning* of sin, God is concerned with it in various ways, *first*, by *permitting* it. This the scripture teaches us—"I gave them up unto their own

hearts' lust, and they walked in their own counsels," (Psalm lxxxi. 12.) "Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways," (Acts xiv. 16.) But here we must carefully observe, that *permission* does not imply *approbation;* far be it from us to say this of God. Again, we must not imagine that it is a mere cessation of the divine will, as though God either ignorantly, or unwillingly, or even indifferently, permitted what he does permit; for this is contrary both to his wisdom and to his power, since there is nothing more unworthy of God, than to suffer any thing to take place, and at the same time to wink at it, or to behold any thing taking place, while he himself (if we may so speak) remains an inactive spectator of it. Further, to *permit* is not simply *not-to-prevent*, as is evident from this one argument—If God permits sin by not preventing it, he either *wills not-to-prevent it*, or he *puts forth no act of volition at all;* if the latter, then the event takes place, either against God's will, and without any regard on his part, which it were impious to assert; if *the former*, then that permission will not be a simple *non-prevention*, but an effectual *volition* on the part of God, whereby he suffers man to use his own liberty, and puts no hindrance in the way of sin. This permission also includes the preservation of man's life and faculties, which God could take away, if he wished to prevent sin, as he took away life from Pharaoh, Sennacherib, and Ahaz's soldiers (Exod. xiv; 2 Kings xix. 37; i. 10, 12;) and as he took away strength and power from the Sodomites, from Balaam, from Jeroboam, from the Syrian hosts (Gen. xix. 10; Numb. xxiii. 12, 26; xxiv. 13; 1 Kings xiii. 4; 2 Kings vi. 18, 19.) It implies also the not opposing a superior strength and power by way of hindrance. This then is the *first act* of God in reference to sin. Do not ask why God hath permitted it; for it is not for us to pry into these secrets: we are sure he has permitted, the reason why is unknown; this only we know, that God brings forth out of the darkness of sin the light of his own glory.

The *second act*, by which God is concerned with sin, is that by which he forsakes the sinner, giving him up to himself, taking away from him the light which he has abused, and the Spirit which restrained him, so that, all barriers being removed, he rushes headlong, the reins being as it were thrown loosely on his neck. Thus God is said to have "given up the Gentiles to vile affections, to their own lusts, and to a reprobate mind," (Rom. i.

24, 26, 28;) and so Zechariah the son of Jehoiada, said to the people, "Because ye have forsaken the Lord, he hath also forsaken you," (2 Chron. xxiv. 20.) Thus we read of God's smiting men with *madness*, *blindness*, and *hardness of heart*, *making heavy* or *stopping* their ears, &c.

The *third act* is that by which God presents opportunities in objects not evil in themselves, but which by corrupt man are turned into evil; now these objects God proposes, either by not preventing the things which offer themselves to man voluntarily and in a natural order, or else by some particular influence on them; and that these opportunities and objects do not of their own nature force to evil is evident from this, that very often the same objects produce different effects in different subjects, as one and the same food is sweet to one, and tasteless to another—healthful to this man, but injurious to that, on account of the different constitution of their bodies. Thus we see that David was tempted to adultery by only looking at Bathsheba; while Joseph could not be drawn to the same sin, even by the repeated solicitations of his mistress. Under this head comes that also, by which God does not remove the occasions of sin, and those objects in reference to which men feel inclined to commit sin, as he prevented Saul from killing David, Ahab and Jezebel from killing the prophets, and the forty Jews from killing Paul, (1 Sam. xix. 11, 12; 1 Kings xviii. 4; Acts xxiii. 12.)

The *fourth act* is that, by which God, being angry with the sinner, gives the reins to Satan, who being thus free to act, "worketh in the children of disobedience," (Eph. ii. 2.) And the *fifth act* is that, by which God stirs up in the mind some thoughts, which are good in themselves, but which sinful man can abuse; thus he willed that Joseph's brethren should think that he was specially beloved by their father, which thought consumed them with envy, and urged them on to wicked and murderous designs.

These points can be very plainly proved from scripture; but the question is, Whether God does any thing more in respect to sin, than what we have already laid down? Now many parts of scripture appear to intimate that he does something more; for instance, he is said to have "hardened Pharaoh's heart," to have given David's wives to Absalom, to have commanded Shimei to curse David, and to send "a lying spirit," &c. What

is the exact meaning of such expressions, I will honestly confess I am ignorant. Most divines attempt to explain it by saying, that God is the author of the essence of human actions, by virtue of his concurrence in producing them, but not the author of their sinfulness. To prove this, they observe that it is not an unusual thing for one and the same action to have two causes; for instance, the soul of a lame man is the principle or cause of that man's motion, when he walks, inasmuch as it sends out of the brain, where it is situated, animal spirits into the nerves and muscles of the man's legs; but if the man is lame, the soul is not the cause of that lameness, although the cause of the walking, but the bad affection either of the leg, or of the man himself: and in the same manner a king is the cause of the death which is inflicted on a criminal by the executioner, yet he is not the cause of any cruelty which may be shown in that death, or of the hatred under the influence of which the executioner may put the man to death, as having been previously his enemy. 2. That actions cannot be said to be *essentially* good and evil, but that they are so according to their different circumstances (which indeed is the case with at least the most part); for instance, to kill may be a good or a bad action; good, if commanded by the magistrate; bad, if done by a private individual. 3. That most affections or passions are of themselves neither good nor bad, as *love*, *desire*, *hatred*, &c., they have nothing evil in themselves; and, consequently, God may excite these affections, without directing them to what is evil. 4. That there are many actions, which are good in regard to the essence of the action, but which become evil in reference, not to the *action*, but to the *mode* in which it is done, (which mode does not *necessarily* go along with the action,) and which may, therefore, spoil an action otherwise good, and commanded by God, as in the cases of *praying*, *fasting*, *or giving alms*, *to be seen of men.* In these things it is easy to comprehend how the action is from God, but the evil of it from man. 5. That these two points may be distinguished even in sins of omission; for it is not true, that in such sins there is no action at all. Every omission has an act of the will, either preceding or accompanying it, which is the cause of that omission. These, then, are the considerations by which divines endeavour to illustrate the difficult question of the Providence of God over evil actions.

But there are certain actions which appear to be evil in their *very nature*, such as *hatred of God*, &c. In these it is very difficult to distinguish the essence of the action from the wickedness of it. Now divines reply, that in these, as well as in those before treated of, the act itself may be distinguished from the sinfulness of the act. But because I know that many cannot conceive this, it has sometimes occurred to me, that we may put it in this form: God in these actions is the author of the motions which precede them; for instance, the motions which precede the hatred of God, but not the author of the act of hatred. And these are the arguments which have occurred to me in proof of this position: *first*, in order that hatred of God may be stirred up within the mind, certain motions must be previously stirred up in the body, and also certain thoughts in the soul, by which it is inclined to hate any object which may be presented to it. These motions and thoughts are not at all evil of themselves, but that direction of them towards God, which takes place by our own will, is the greatest of all sins (hatred of God). *Secondly*, there is no reason why God should not be said, by acting on the blood, or on the spirits, or on the mind, to excite those motions, nay, even that very affection which we call *hatred*. But because the affections always select some objects, and are very frequently directed towards those which are presented to them, it comes to pass, that corrupt man, in whom the affection of hatred has been excited, having his thoughts at the time about God, wickedly hates, or feels a hatred of him. *Thirdly*, if any one cannot conceive how the affection of hatred can be excited, without any direction to an object, let it be observed, that we are very often in such a state, as that all things displease us, and we are prepared to hate whatever objects may be presented to us, although there is no object particularly before us at the time. Be it observed also, that no man can feel a hatred of God, except many things have before preceded in his mind, which it would be too tedious to detail. When I have been asked upon this subject, Why God should excite such an affection of hatred in man, as he *knows* will produce a great sin? I have asked in my turn, Why God has at any time permitted a sin, which he was able to prevent? why he permits objects to be presented, which he *knows* will influence men to sin? why he preserves the faculties or powers of man, which he knows he will abuse? I re-

plied further, That God ought in no wise to be blamed: because those affections, opportunities, and objects do not of themselves influence men to sin, but only through man's corruption, of which God is not in any way the author; and because he by no means forces to sin, but on the contrary, forbids sin, and threatens punishment to the transgressor; it is man, who by his natural propensity freely commits sin. This is the way in which we have ventured to illustrate our opinion; perhaps it will satisfy some; if not, let them maintain other views, such as we have before given. So much for God's providence in respect to the *beginning* of sin.

The acts of divine Providence in regard to the *progress* of sin, or sin while it is *being* committed, are three. The *first* consists in God's directing sinners unconsciously to themselves, so that they sin in reference to one object rather than another, not that he inspires men with an evil inclination, but he overrules their natural propensities in such a manner, that they direct them to an object, which God hath determined to punish. This is exemplified in the king of Assyria, whom God designing to send to the Jews in order to punish their impiety, so directed the oracles which he consulted, being doubtful whether he should make war upon the Ammonites, or upon the Jews, that having passed by the former, he marched against the latter. The *second* act consists in God's causing the sin not to reach the end designed by the sinner, but another end designed by God long before; thus he so overruled the sin of Joseph's brethren, that they contributed to accomplish his exaltation, which they designed to prevent. The *third* is that, by which God sets limits or bounds to sin, so that it may not increase to a greater height, or spread to a greater extent, or last a longer time; and this he accomplishes in various ways, such as by enlightening the mind, restraining the desires, removing evil opportunities, &c. Thus God did not suffer the bones of Christ to be broken; (John xix. 36,) or Joseph to be destroyed by his brethren, Peter by Herod, Job by Satan. The acts of divine Providence in regard to the *end* of sin, or sin when it *has been* committed, are various. One act is, the direction of the sin to a good end, as the selling of Joseph to the preservation of Jacob's family, and the crucifixion of Jesus Christ to the redemption of mankind. Just as a judge may make use of lions and other beasts for the punishment of criminals, or a physician leeches which

will not let go the skin till they are full of blood; and also vipers, for the curing of sick persons. Another act is the punishing of sin, both in this life, and in the life to come, and also the forgiving and pardoning of it. But we have now said enough on this subject; only we must in the next chapter explain some passages of scripture, which *seem* to make God the author or worker of sin.

CHAPTER XII.

OF VARIOUS PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE CONCERNING GOD'S PROVIDENCE OVER SIN.

Nothing now remains but to explain these passages of scripture; and *first*, God is represented as *blinding* and *hardening* men. (Exod. vii. 3; Isaiah vi. 9, 10; Matt. xiii. 14; John xii. 40.) To understand this, we must observe that this blinding and hardening is attributed to three persons:—to *man* himself, (Jer. v. 3; Ezek. xii. 2; Zech. vii. 11,) that Pharaoh is said to have hardened *himself*, (Exod. viii. 15, 19, 32:)—to the *devil*, (2 Cor. iv. 3, 4:)—and to *God* himself, who commands the prophet to blind the heart of the people, (Isaiah vi. 9, 10, compared with John xii. 40,) and who is said to have hardened Pharaoh and the Jews.

But this hardening or blinding is in very different senses ascribed to God, to the devil, and to man. *Man* blinds and hardens himself, when he will not hear, understand, and obey the preached word, but gives himself up entirely to his passions; he is born with this hardness of heart, but in this manner he increases it. The *devil*, as an executioner, blinds men's minds by presenting fit objects to stir up the affections by which the mind is blinded, and by raising ideas of sin through the excitement of the animal spirits, and by other means of this sort. But when I say that the devil does this, as an executioner, I mean that God permits him to harden man, and thus makes use of him as an executioner, to whom he gives up man as a criminal; in the same way as the Assyrian is called "the rod of God's anger."

(Isaiah x. 5.) But as for God, he, as an angry judge hardens man on account of his past and present sins; but if we be asked how this is done, we reply,—1. By not enlightening, or by not softening, man's heart. 2. By withdrawing his grace, which man has abused, just as a master takes away light from his servants, when he sees them abuse it to surfeiting and drunkenness; now as darkness follows, when light is withdrawn, and darkness is attended by blindness, stumbling, falling, &c., so the light of reason being obscured, and the light of grace, such as it is, being extinguished, there follows darkness in the understanding, alienation in the will, evil motions in the affections; the mind is blinded, conscience is laid asleep, man is hardened. 3. By delivering him up to Satan, who assaults him in various ways. 4. By not restraining his passions, but allowing them free liberty. 5. By furnishing him with objects, opportunities, and means, which are calculated to bring him back to God, but which he abuses, and by which his lusts are stirred up, just as cold water being thrown upon lime draws forth the heat of it. 6. By granting him many temporal blessings; for, judging from this external happiness, that he is beloved by God, he more and more entangles himself in worldly affections. 7. By bearing with his ungodliness for a long time, or by punishing it but slightly. 8. By not causing his conscience to be stirred to repentance by any feeling of remorse; hence sinners are said to be "past feeling," (Ephes. iv. 19.) From these things it is plain, that God is properly said to harden man, as a Judge; nor can it be objected, that a judge is bound to give to every man his due; for when God deserts man, and gives him over to a reprobate mind, when he leaves him to Satan, and withdraws from him that grace which he had given, he does give to sinful man nothing but what is his due, and what he justly deserves.

Pharaoh furnishes an example of a man thus hardened, for God hardened him by bestowing upon him numerous blessings, which he afterwards abused, nay, by elevating him to the royal dignity—by not softening his disposition, naturally cruel, and therefore naturally disposed to oppress and enslave the Israelites—by sending to him Moses, who was his own subject; for the command was grievous, sent as it was, from an unknown God, by a subject of his own kingdom—by not first bringing him to the knowledge of himself; hence he asked, "Who is the Lord?"—by ordering him to let the people go,

which would be a loss to a covetous prince—by performing signs and wonders, which amazed, rather than affected him, or which were capable of being imitated by the magicians, and were injurious and destructive to the whole kingdom, consequently, rousing his indignation—by removing the plagues, which, by the grace of God, might have a little softened his heart—by giving him up to his own passions—and by other methods, which may be gathered from what has already been said. But for the better understanding of this subject, we may observe in the first place, that there was in Pharaoh, a very great attachment to idolatry, superstition, and magic; hence he did not worship any other God, than the God whom his ancestors worshipped; therefore, when Moses and Aaron first delivered to him the commands of the Almighty God, the superstitious prince thought that they did not proceed from the divine influence of the true Deity, but from one of an inferior kind, or else were the inventions of Moses and Aaron; in which imagination he was confirmed by seeing his own magicians imitate the first miracles performed by Moses. Again, at the second plague of the frogs, Pharaoh appeared softened for a little time, because he was sensible that only the God of Israel could deliver him from this calamity, who was therefore more powerful than his own deities; but he was again hardened, because the frogs were taken away. The plague of the lice, which the magicians could not imitate, did not soften his heart, because this calamity appeared to him less than those which had preceded; whence he believed that he should be more easily delivered from it. Moreover, the succeeding plagues rather hardened than softened him, because he was delivered from them; thus he resembled a river, which, when it is banked up on both sides, swells and rises the higher, and having burst these barriers, overflows with greater impetuosity; or, like an anvil, which grows harder by frequent strokes of the hammer. Once more, by the last plague he seemed to be entirely subdued; but the result proved that he was not even by this means softened, after he had heard what route the Israelites had taken; because he hoped that he might be able yet to bring them back to their former slavery; God thus permitting it, because he would destroy Pharaoh, and bring him to the waters of the Red Sea, in which that proud and covetous king miserably perished.

Again, God is said to *tempt* men, (Gen. xxii. 1. Deut. viii. 2;) but we must observe that temptation is of two kinds, one good, the other evil; the former for trial, the latter for deceiving; the first is ascribed to God, the second is denied concerning him, (James i. 13.) God is said to tempt, when he enjoins upon men those things, which try their faith and constancy, as when he required of Abraham to sacrifice his son. Moreover he is said to *seduce and deceive* the prophets and the people, (Ezekiel xiv. 9. Jer. iv. 10.) But by this is only meant that he permits men to be deceived, delivering them up to darkness, error, or impostors, and in no way enlightening their minds. The passage in Jer. xx. 7, where the prophet says, "O Lord, thou hast deceived me, and I was deceived," can be better rendered, "thou hast allured or persuaded me," i. e. thou hast drawn me to undertake the office; and therefore he simply shows by these words, that the office of predicting those calamities to the Jews was divinely put upon him, although he suffered such dreadful persecutions on account of these predictions. The words following prove this, for he says, that, when he had resolved not to speak what had been commanded him, he was driven and compelled to do so by a divine providence. Or else, we may say, Jeremiah uttered these words with a mind confused, and from the infirmity of the flesh, thinking he was deceived by God, because from the words of God ill-understood, he had experienced far different things than those he had imagined. Or the words may be understood hypothetically, as if the holy prophet had said, If I have been deceived in order to deceive others, as the Jews slanderously affirm, then it was God who deceived me; thus all the calamities of the Jews fall back upon God. Nothing can be concluded from the passage in Job xiii. 16, "The deceived and the deceiver are his;" for the holy man shows in these words, that all things depend upon God, that no one wanders out of the right path, no one deceives another without God's permission, and that he who is deceived, and he who deceives, are both equally observed by God.

Again, God is said to have "commanded Shimei to curse David," (2 Sam. xvi. 10—12.) But these words are not to be taken literally, neither did David so take them. For had he believed that God had really commanded Shimei to curse him, he would not have believed

that Shimei sinned in so doing, nor would he, when dying, have commissioned Solomon to punish him. The words therefore mean that God caused to occur a favourable opportunity of cursing David, which Shimei was tempted to embrace for that purpose, just as if God had said in so many words *Curse David.* Shimei was hostile to David, for he was a Benjamite of the family of Saul, and therefore was vexed that the kingdom, formerly governed by Saul, had fallen to David; he secretly cherished his hatred, and was ready to show forth that hatred, whenever the opportunity should offer. God in his providence affords him an opportunity of giving vent to his spleen, by bringing in his way David whom he hated, and that too under circumstances, in which he could curse him without danger to himself, viz. when David was deprived of rank and dignity; thus God did not prevent his evil disposition, but directed it to the punishment of David, that he might be humbled. The king, being sensible of this, regarded this direction of Providence, as if it were a command divinely given for his own chastisement. Again, when God is said to "send a lying spirit to deceive Ahab," (1 Kings xxii.) far be it from us to think that God actually was the author of this disposition to falsehood; it simply denotes, that God, to punish Ahab, permitted him to be deceived by many false prophets, and being thus deceived, to join battle with the Syrians at Ramoth, and thus to suffer the punishment of his sins.

Further, God is said to have "given David's wives to his son Absalom," (2 Sam. xii. 11, 12.) Now in this case we must separate the giving up of David's wives to Absalom, from Absalom's lying with them; the former was from God, the latter at the instigation of the wicked Ahithophel. We must also observe, that it pleased God to punish David for his adultery; for this purpose he chose to give the honours of royalty to Absalom his son, and to deprive David of them; hence God attributes to himself the giving of such a power or liberty to Absalom, and such as served for the punishment of David, in the same way as he elsewhere attributes to himself the persecutions raised against his church, which however take place to the very great guilt of the persecutors. Once more, when God is said, (2 Thess. xi. 11,) to "send men strong delusion, that they should believe a lie," it only denotes what he does in

regard to those, who despise and reject his truth, which has been confirmed by so many miracles. To such persons God permits to be preached false doctrine, which allows them to indulge their carnal lusts, and is confirmed by "lying wonders." God also permits the arguments, which are got up from every quarter to defend the "lie," to draw them away entirely from divine truth, and bestows no grace upon them; on the contrary, he deprives them of the light he had given, which they abused, and delivers them over to a reprobate mind, and thus being left to themselves, they believe a lie. Other passages of scripture may be easily explained from what has been already said.

But before we close the subject of providence, we must make the following observations. *First*, we must be very careful never to murmur against God's providence, or to accuse it of injustice, but rather, with Job, David, and others, to adore his ways, as most holy and righteous, and to acquiesce in them with all humility. *Secondly*, we must never accuse providence as the cause of our wickedness, but only our own depraved nature, which inclines us to every kind of sin. *Thirdly*, we must not, under the pretext of every event being immovably ordained by providence, indulge in idleness and inactivity, or rashly encounter any kind of danger; but to attend to and make use of the means appointed by God, being at the same time careful not to rest too much in second causes, as if God could not preserve us without means. *Fourthly*, we ought not to be over-anxious about our temporal affairs, but to cast ourselves upon the paternal care of God, neither carelessly neglecting, nor rashly confiding in, human means, and frequently remembering Abraham's watch-word, "*The Lord will provide.*" We will now conclude with addressing God in the words of Arnobius; *O great and mighty Parent of things invisible! O thou who art unseen, and incomprehensible to all other beings; thou art worthy to receive from every living and intelligent being, unceasing praise and gratitude; before thee it would be becoming to fall on the bended knee for our whole lives, and to worship thee with continual supplications. For thou art the first cause, the very place and space and foundation of all things that exist, infinite, self-existent, immortal, everlasting,*

independent, confined by no corporeal form, circumscribed within no limits, without quality, quantity, locality, motion, and habit, concerning whom nothing can be properly expressed in mortal language — to comprehend thee at all, we must hold our peace and be silent.

CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY.

BOOK THE FOURTH.

OF THE FALL.

CHAPTER I.

OF THE FALL OF ANGELS.

As God decreed to create angels and men, so he decreed to permit their fall. For since nothing in the world takes place without his knowledge and will, it would be absurd to believe that some of the angels, and also man, fell from their original state of innocence without the foreknowledge, or without the permission, of the great Arbiter of events. We believe then that the Almighty by the same act by which he decreed to create angels and man, at the same time decreed to permit them to use or abuse the freedom of action bestowed upon them; how they abused this freedom is the subject of the following book; and first we shall speak of the fall of angels.

It has been before observed, that the angels were created by God holy and innocent: let no one imagine that they were created with any of that corruption which they afterwards fell into; for thus God would be viewed as the author of sin, the very thought of which is impious. But although they were all created by God in a state of holiness, they did not all continue in that state, as the following passage of scripture declares—"He (*the*

devil) was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth," (John viii. 44.) "The angels which kept not their first estate. but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day," (Jude 6.) The fall of angels has been known almost through the whole world: there are some well-known verses of Empedocles, in which *dæmons* or devils are represented as falling from heaven into Pontus, and there suffering the punishment of their wickedness. There is also the story of the giants hurled down to the infernal regions, and of Ate cast out of heaven.

These fallen angels are called devils, evil, unclean, lying spirits, spiritual wickednesses, and angels of darkness. They have a prince set over them, who is called Beelzebub, Matt. x. 25; xii. 24, the same as the god of the Ekronites, (2 Kings i. 2.) He is also called "Satan," (Job i. 6.) "the devil," "the accuser of the brethren," "the ruler of death," "the prince of this world," "the god of this world," "the great dragon, the old serpent;" (1 Peter v. 8; Rev. xii. 10; Heb. ii. 14; John xii. 31; 2 Cor. iv. 4; Rev. xii. 9.) He is called by the ancient Rabbins *Sammael*, i. e. *revolting from God*, the angel of death. He is no where called *Lucifer:* for the passage in Isaiah xiv. 12, does not allude to the devil, but to the king of Babylon; in the same way the king of Tyre is called "the anointed cherub," (Ezek. xxviii. 14.) Nothing certain can be said of the *time* when the angels sinned; it is not probable that they sinned immediately after the creation, though most likely it was not long after; this however is certain—that angels fell before men. As to the *number* of the fallen angels, it is rash, to say the least, to attempt the settling of this point, as the schoolmen and other ancient writers did, making a false application of Rev. xii. 4, though without doubt their number is very great.

Nor can we determine any thing certain concerning the nature of their sin. The author of the book of Wisdom, says, that the devil was moved with *envy* against man, and the cause of this envy was, that God had conferred upon man, and not upon angels, the whole universe, and dominion over the creatures. Others maintain that the cause of his fall was *pride*, which indeed Paul calls "the condemnation (or judgment) of the devil," (1 Tim. iii. 6.) Hence it is that devils have claimed divine worship. It is disputed what kind of pride this

was, whether aspiring to be gods, or rebellion against the Son of God. Some have even ascribed fornication to these evil spirits, from a misunderstanding of the passage in Gen. vi. 2. On all these subjects however, it is better to be silent, when the scripture is silent. It is not improbable that the want of a due regard and attention to the nature of God, and to the duties imposed upon them, caused the angels to grow remiss in the contemplation of their Creator, so that turning the powers of their understanding from God to themselves, they began to grow proud, from an overweening self-love, which was quickly followed by rebellion.

These evil angels, by every method, although to no effectual purpose, are endeavouring to obscure the glory of God, and they altogether oppose the salvation of men; and God sometimes gives them full liberty, both for the punishment of the wicked, and for the trials of the godly, and also to preserve the latter from sin: thus there was given to Paul, the angel or "messenger of Satan to buffet him," that he might not be "exalted by the abundance of revelations." (2 Cor. xii. 7.) The scriptures plainly teach us that they tempt men to sin, (1 Peter v. 8; 2 Cor. xi. 3.) that they "work in the children of disobedience," and take possession of their hearts, (Eph. ii. 2; Acts v. 3; John xiii. 2.) They are always on the watch, to ascertain the particular inclinations or passions of men; they generally keep their ends in view from a distance, and often arrive at them by a long series of turnings and windings.

But here it must be remarked, that their power is not unlimited, but limited. "The Lord said unto Satan, Behold all that he (Job) hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand," (Job i. 12.) So the devils besought Christ, saying, "If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine," (Matt. viii. 31.) Future events also are not known to them; for this is the attribute of the true God. But if they have ever revealed future things, as some would infer from the case of oracles, (of which however there may be some doubt,) this has taken place, either because they stole this knowledge (as it were) from the secrets of the prophets, or by their amazing quickness of motion, gained the knowledge of events that took place at a great distance, or because they were able to ascertain from natural causes, what would take place, as Tertullian observed; or else, we may say, they revealed that which it had been di-

vinely permitted them to perform. Further, it is difficult to say, and it can hardly be conceived, how Satan acts upon the body, and upon the mind, and how he can produce those things which are commonly attributed to him. We must not, however, imagine that Satan can dispose the will of man to evil at his own pleasure: for the will of man, assisted by divine grace, can easily resist him. Nor are all sins to be attributed to the agency of the devil, for man himself has inclination and power enough to commit many sins. Finally, be it observed, that the only means of driving far away from us these evil spirits, are to fortify ourselves with piety, faith, and constant prayer; to apply ourselves to the practice of Christian virtues; and to trust confidently in the divine assistance. In the mean time the existence of evil spirits shows us the inability of the *creatures*, when they are left to themselves, and the entire liberty and power of the supreme Being.

CHAPTER II.

OF THE FALL OF OUR FIRST PARENTS.

In a former book we described the happy condition of the first man, when he lived in innocence, and enjoyed the favour of his God. His happiness did not continue; for in a little time he became miserable, when from being upright he became sinful. An account of this most lamentable fall must now, therefore, be given. In order to this, it must be observed, as before, that God imposed upon man a law, or prohibition, not to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, that on the one hand he might try man's obedience; and on the other show him that he was his sovereign Lord; and that man might be sensible of his own subjection, and might profess it by some act of obedience, such as vassals are accustomed to perform, as a token of acknowledgment. Man, forgetting his duty to God, violated this law, easy as it was, and consisting only of a single prohibition. It is to no purpose to inquire how long he

stood, and at what time he fell: for to be ignorant of this is no sin. Some maintain that he continued in holiness for thirty three years, as many as Christ lived in the flesh. Others hold that he fell forty days after his creation; others think it was sooner. Some have ventured to maintain that Adam was created at nine in the morning, fell at one in the afternoon, and was driven from Paradise at three o'clock; or, as others think, on the sixth day; but all these are vain speculations.

It was the devil who tempted man to sin, because he envied man's happiness, and the divine glory; and in order to accomplish this his horrid purpose, he assumed the form of the serpent, the most crafty of all living creatures. Now that this was a real *serpent*, is evident from the words of Moses, from the description given of the serpent as the most "subtle of all the beasts in the field," and from the punishment inflicted by God upon him, as a mark of his temptation; and that the devil spoke by this serpent is equally evident, not merely because only a spirit could have spoken by a serpent, and only an evil spirit could have spoken what was false, but also from those scriptures, in which the devil is called "a murderer from the beginning," (John viii. 44,) "that old serpent, the devil," (Rev. xii. 9; xx. 2.) Hence Paul expresses his fears lest the same "serpent, that beguiled Eve by his subtilty, should corrupt the minds of the Corinthians from the simplicity which is in Christ," (2 Cor. xi. 3.) It is true, Moses does not mention the devil, because he was performing the part of an historian, not an interpreter; he relates the fact, he does not explain the mystery. The Jews rightly understood this, who represented Sammael, the angel of death, as riding upon the serpent. Nor was this unknown to the heathens. For a very ancient Syrian writer among them calls the leader of the dæmons who were hurled down from heaven by Jupiter, *Ophioneus*, or *Serpentinus*. And no doubt from the scripture history sprung the story of the watchful dragon, celebrated by the poets, as the keeper of the golden apples of the Hesperides. To the same source also may be traced the custom of showing or exhibiting a serpent in the most ancient mysteries of the Greeks.

This, therefore, was the first plot of the devil, to conceal himself under the form of a serpent; nor should it appear more strange for this creature to speak with a human voice, than for Balaam's ass to do the same. We have no occasion, therefore, with Josephus, to believe

that speech was natural to the serpent, as Basil also believed, and Plato before them, who maintained that in the golden age men and beasts conversed together. Under the appearance then of a serpent, the devil assaulted Eve; nor is it strange that she was not at all astonished when she heard the creature speak, because she had no experience whatever of this and other things. The crafty tempter began his attack on the woman, in the absence of her husband, and thus accosted her, "Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of the trees of the garden?" As if he had said, 'Is it likely that God having given you dominion over all things, should have forbidden you to eat of the trees of the garden? it were impious even to think so.' He does not at first arraign the divine prohibition, which would not have pleased Eve, but he first asks, as if ignorant, whether it were true, that God had forbidden the use of all the trees; to which the woman replies, that God had only forbidden the fruit of the tree which was in the midst of the garden. Satan then proceeds to the threatening which was added to the commandment, and endeavours to make light of it, saying, "Ye shall not die;" for who, he insinuates, can believe that a tree, more excellent than the rest, and placed in a beautiful garden, is of a deadly nature? Thus he wishes it to appear that he doubted whether such was the prohibition of God, as if Adam had not faithfully repeated to Eve the divine injunction; or else he contends that God was not really serious in the injunction. "Ye shall not die," says he; but lest any scruple should remain in Eve's mind, he added, that this tree possessed so great a power of conferring knowledge, that they should be made equal to God, and that God well knew this: "God doth know, that, in the day ye eat thereof your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." He concludes, therefore, that she ought no longer to hesitate, and that the inviting fruit was fairly open before her, without any guard around it.

To this temptation the woman yielded, and ate of the fruit of the tree, and drew her husband also into a participation of her guilt. It is of no consequence to know what arguments Eve used; whether she related to him her conversation with the serpent, or whether Adam was influenced by his great affection for his wife; one thing is certain, *that he ate the forbidden fruit.* Therefore when Paul declares that "Adam was not deceived," (1

Tim. xi. 14,) he clearly means that he was not deceived *the first*, nor *by* the serpent; but it is evident that he was not the less sinful. Indeed some maintain that his was the greater sin, inasmuch as he yielded without seeing the enemy, being allured merely by the charms of his wife, whom he ought to have controlled by his superior prudence.

On this subject various questions are raised, which must be briefly resolved. The *first* question is, when the first sin commenced. To which we reply, that probably it commenced, when Eve began to doubt whether she had rightly understood the intention of God in forbidding the fruit of the tree. Afterwards, when she ought to have consulted God upon this subject, she believed the devil, who said that they should *not* die; in the next place, she was flattered with the vain hope, held out by Satan, of knowing all things, and becoming equal to God; and at last, she reached forth her hand to the fruit. On the other hand, the commencement of the sin may have been a *thoughtless inattention* to the divine precepts; which if she had always kept in her mind, she never would have listened to the tempter; and from this want of consideration arose *unbelief*, by which she began to doubt God's word, and to pay undue attention to that of the devil. The *second* question is, What was the cause of Adam's fall? It is replied, that this cause is not to be sought for, either in God, or in the devil, or in the forbidden tree: not in *God*, for he used neither persuasion nor authority towards man in this matter; on the contrary he expressly forbade him to touch the fruit: he had created him holy and upright; he had given him sufficient strength to fulfil his commandments; he had not withdrawn any inward grace which he had before given. Neither is the cause to be looked for in the *devil;* for he used persuasion only towards man; nor was there any irresistible power in his temptations; since he spoke contrary to God's express injunction. *The devil would not have ensnared man*, says Augustine, *had not man already begun to please himself.* Nor is the cause to be sought for in the *tree;* for neither the beauty of its fruit, nor the desire of knowledge, ought to have weighed against the divine commandment. It was, therefore, only the free will of man which was the cause of his transgression, and which, by its own spontaneous act, directed itself towards a forbidden object, set before it by an alienated mind; nor *can the mind*, as Augustine

observes, *be thrown down from the seat of lawful government, except by the will.*

The *third* question is, how it was possible for man, holy and upright, to fall? We reply, that this should not appear strange; for although man was created holy and upright, yet his holiness was not so confirmed and unchangeable, that he could not fall from it; he was created holy and righteous, but mutable, so that he could stand, if he would, and also fall, if he would; it is therefore no more to be wondered at, that changeable man should have changed, than that man, at first quiescent, should afterwards begin to move. But if you ask why God created man mutable—ask also, why he created him a man, and not a god. But the reason why man so easily gave ear to the seductions of the devil, seems to be, the natural desire which man has, of obtaining the good which he does not possess.

Fourthly, it is inquired, how God concurred, or what God did, in this fall? We reply, that it is far better on this subject to keep silence, than to speak much, since the scripture is altogether silent. It is certain, however, that God did not influence man to sin, nor Satan to tempt him, and that he did not withdraw from Adam any grace that had been given him, since such withdrawing would have been a punishment, for which there is no cause where there is no guilt preceding. Yet it is equally certain that God of his infinite foreknowledge did foreknow this fall, and did decree to permit it. For if he had not decreed to permit it, he could not have certainly foreknown it, because the changeable nature of man could not be the foundation of certain and absolute foreknowledge. And truly, if not even a sparrow falleth to the ground without his knowledge, who can imagine that this fall, which disturbed the whole order of nature, happened without either the knowledge, or the will of God? It is certain, moreover, that God allowed Satan to tempt Adam—that he afforded an opportunity to the former of assaulting the latter—that he did not prevent the latter from yielding to the temptation of the former—that he did not give man any new grace in addition to what had already been given him, nor yet refuse him any that he sought, for he sought none—and that he preserved the faculties and powers of man. We must not inquire into any thing more that God may have done in this mysterious transaction; it is better to check our curiosity, and to confess our ignorance, than to speak

rashly. In all God's proceedings in this matter he was most holy, so that not the least stain of sin can be attributed to him.

We may only add that Adam's sin was very great; for it consisted of inordinate desire; aspiring to equality with God; rebellion against his sovereign Lord; ingratitude and contempt of God. The greatness of this sin will further appear from considering who was the *offender;* one loaded with so many blessings from God, furnished with so many endowments, having no motives to sin;—and *when* it was that he sinned; viz. having scarcely come out of his Creator's hands, or at least not long afterwards;—and the *sin* itself; one that could easily have been avoided, in the midst of so great an abundance of good things. Augustine therefore very justly observes—*Whoever thinks the condemnation of Adam too severe or unjust, cannot properly conceive how great iniquity there was in transgressing, where it was so very easy to abstain from sin; and as therefore the obedience of Abraham is justly declared to be great, because the command given him, to slay his son, was most difficult, so in Paradise the disobedience was so much the greater, in proportion to the easiness of the command.*

CHAPTER III.

OF SIN.

By the fall of our first parents, "sin entered into the world," Rom. v. 12. Now sin is expressed by various terms, in the Hebrew and Greek originals, which have each their peculiar emphasis, and which, though they all denote sin, yet set it forth under different forms. Thus it is termed *sin, iniquity, offence, transgression, trespass,* &c., which respectively signify, a *wandering from the mark,* a *being contrary to justice or right, stumbling, overstepping the bounds,* &c. But its nature is clearly shown by the apostle, when he says, "Sin is the transgression of the law," 1 John iii. 4. Now by the law we understand here the law of God, who is the only

"lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy," James iv. 12. For human laws do not bind the conscience of themselves, or by their own right, but only in reference to the law of God, which binds us to obey our superiors, and these, only as far as they do not enjoin any thing contrary to the law of God, Acts iv. 9; v. 29. Now since the law of God commands some things, and forbids others, we transgress that law, by leaving undone what it commands, and by doing what it forbids; and these are called sins of *omission* and *commission*, of which we shall speak more particularly hereafter. Again, since the law requires all holiness and rectitude, internal as well as external, we transgress it, when we are destitute of that holiness, and when we feel any inclination towards what is evil.

The essence of sin therefore consists in a *contrariety to the divine law*, and it is the *absence* of that rectitude, which ought to be in a rational creature according to the requirement of that law. Hence in order to ascertain whether any thing is sinful, we must examine whether it is contrary to the law; for nothing else is required. It is not always required that it should be voluntary, i. e. that it should be done knowingly and deliberately, as will appear from what we shall have to say of original sin. Neither is there required a fixed resolution to do evil, as evil, and as forbidden by God. Nor is it also required, that the action should be undertaken for an evil end, although that evil end increases the greatness of the sin. But because we have said that sin is the *absence* of rectitude, we must not hence conclude that it it is a mere privation, as death is the privation of life; for it is not only the privation of that righteousness which the law requires, but also a positively depraved quality, opposed to that righteousness. We must judge of the evils of the soul, as we do of those of the body: now as bodily disease is not only the withdrawing of the proper temperature and mixture of the humours, but is also a disorderly and improper mixture of those humours, so it is in the disease of the soul, which is sin; this sin is not only the absence of good, but it is like a mortification pervading and corrupting all its powers; and hence the scripture frequently calls sins by the names of *spots*, and *stains*, which God washes and cleanses away.

There are two principal effects of sin—it corrupts and disorders the soul, and it makes us liable to punishment

—in other words, it makes us *impure*, and it makes us *guilty*. With regard to the former effect, sins are called *filth*, *diseases*, *wounds*, &c.; in reference to the latter, they are called *crimes*, *offences*, *debts*, &c. The former has a reference to the immaculate holiness of God, to which it is contrary; the latter to his avenging justice, and to the penalty of the law. Now sin makes us liable to punishment, both from the natural and indispensable right of God, founded on his justice, which cannot behold sin without hating, nor hate without punishing it, and also from the dictates of the law, which must be fulfilled, and therefore must denounce punishment against sin. But to speak more distinctly of the punishment of sin, we must reckon as parts of this punishment, the following evils both natural and moral. 1. The ignorance and blindness of the human mind, the depravity of the will, the disorder of the affections, under the influence of which, sinners plunge into every species of iniquity. 2. The most severe remorse and terror of conscience. 3. The innumerable diseases and calamities to which the body is subject. 4. The very remedies employed in curing diseases, many of them most painful in operation, which often change, instead of removing, the disease, and prove rather tortures than remedies. 5. The evils which arise from the want of the necessaries of life, whereby many have perished of famine. 6. Death, which greatly torments men with the fear of its approach. 7. The rebellion of the creatures against man. 8. Those great calamities, which men experience from thunder and lightning, from floods, from the winds, from the sea, and from earthquakes. 9. Dreadful wars, in which men miserably destroy each other. 10. The awful evils of the future world, "outer darkness, weeping and gnashing of teeth, chains of darkness, the worm that dieth not, the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone,"—in short, the most exquisite torments.

We must observe that sin deserves infinite punishment, because it is committed against an infinite Being. But the question is, whether sin deserves punishment that is infinite in *degree?* This is the opinion of almost all orthodox divines; but then they maintain, that, since human nature is not capable of enduring punishment which is infinite in degree, *infinity of intenseness* (as they express it), is made up for by *infinity of duration*. Indeed there can be no doubt that sin deserves the latter punishment, because it is agreeable to reason, that he

who has once sinned against an infinite Being, like God, should never be restored to his favour, unless he can make satisfaction. But it does admit of a doubt, whether sin deserves a punishment which is infinite in degree. For since man is a finite creature, it appears incongruous for him to have been threatened with a punishment of which he is not capable. Besides, if he deserved this punishment, there could not be an inequality of punishments, since God, for the satisfaction of his justice, would have inflicted as great a punishment as the creature could suffer, and therefore there could be no degrees. But although the sinner always deserves punishment, yet he is not necessarily subjected to it, if any surety can be found to satisfy divine justice in his stead; hence, as Paul says, "there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus," Rom. viii. 1, because Christ hath delivered them from it by his death. As to the stain of sin, that is washed away by the influence of the Holy Spirit sanctifying us.

CHAPTER IV.

OF THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE FIRST TRANSGRESSION.

We have spoken of the effects of sin *in general;* we must now speak of the effects of the first sin *in particular;* for as it was very great, so it drew with it the most evil consequences, both to our first parents, and to all their posterity. With regard to its effects on our first parents, they lost their holiness and righteousness, and the principal features of the divine likeness were destroyed; though not the whole likeness, since there remained some traces, like the fragments of a miserable shipwreck, which it pleased God to preserve, in order that from them might be seen the excellence of the original image, and that the world might not degenerate into complete confusion; as well as that a new edifice might be built out of the ruins of the old. This loss of the divine image was followed by a universal corruption of the powers of the soul, and by a rebellious love of self

and of the creatures, which kindled within them unlawful passions. It was in this way that they began to die, since they revolted from God the author of life; and thus the divine sentence began to be put in force—"In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." This loss of holiness was followed by a *sense of nakedness;* for then, as Moses relates, "their eyes were opened, and they knew that they were naked." Moreover, they incurred the wrath of God, and became subject to eternal death and condemnation; whence God, immediately after the commission of the offence called Adam, saying, "Where art thou?" Which words were uttered by God, as though he was ignorant, but they were words of rebuke, by which he summoned the criminal to his bar, and reproached him with his apostasy. Further, they were cast out of Paradise, out of that happy region, as it were, into another world. Finally, calamities of all kinds were poured forth; and especially death, to which they became subject to the very moment they sinned, though they did not die at that time—"Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Here we may introduce the verses of Hilary on this subject—

Postquam primus homo vetito se pascere ligno
Non timuit, captusque dolis se præbuit angui,
Stat reus, et nudus dejecto lumine vestem
Implorans, Dominumque fugit, vultumque recondit
Culpa comes sequitur, peccato obnoxia vita
Debilitat vires. Cœli venientia dona
Æthere demissus paulatim deficit ignis,
Frigore peccati torpentia corda rigescunt,
Cura cibi ventrisque subibat, cura tegendi
Corporis, et sacrum subeunt mortalia pectus.

When the first man had fearless touched the fruit
Of the forbidden tree, and caught with guile,
Obeyed the serpent's voice, he guilty stands
With downcast eyes, and seeks a garb to hide
His naked frame; yea, flees his Maker's face:
But sin attends his steps, brings down his strength,
And makes him mortal—for the immortal fire,
The gift of heaven, now dies away, and sin
Hath chilled his torpid heart; now anxious thoughts
Of food and raiment, and all earthly cares,
Rend and distract the bosom, once divine.

These effects were common to both our first parents, Adam and Eve, but there were some peculiar to each.

On the woman, who had first transgressed, and had tempted the man to transgress also, a double punishment was inflicted—the bringing forth of children with sorrow—and a greater subjection to her husband. The punishment peculiar to the man was labour and trouble of various kinds; "the ground was cursed for his sake, bringing forth thorns and thistles."

Although some of the ancients, as Tatian, maintained that our first parents were damned, we cannot subscribe to this opinion; we do not doubt that soon after their fall they were received into favour, since they had the *first promise* given to them, and doubtless exercised faith in it. There was formerly extant a book concerning Adam's repentance, but by a decree of the Roman council under Gelasius, it was numbered with the apocryphal writings. Many of the ancients also maintained that Adam was buried on Mount Calvary, on which Christ was afterwards crucified and buried, in order that he, who had been the first author of sin, might first experience the efficacy of Christ's blood shed for sin. But of this we may well doubt. It is a ridiculous conceit of the Rabbins, who, mentioning the repentance of Adam, say that, after his fall he offered to God a bull having only one horn in the midst of his forehead, which represented the horn of the Messiah. It is no small proof of God's mercy to the first man, that, though he had passed upon him the sentence of death, he would not immediately execute it, but suffered him to live and rule in the world for a long time, and extended his life to the term of 930 years. It is also a proof of the divine mercy, that some remains of the divine image, some fragments of the precious tablet, were preserved in man, that he might make use of this small remnant in the various employments of human life.

But what are the effects of the first sin on all Adam's posterity? For these also he ruined, and not himself only. For since he was the head and father of the human race, and represented that race in the covenant which God made with him, he could not violate this covenant, without involving in his sin the whole of his descendants. A prince with his subjects constitutes one political body; they are reckoned as one; and therefore the fault of the prince is often visited upon the people, and *vice versâ*, as the very words of the heathen testify—

Πολλάκι καὶ ξύμπασα πόλις κακοῦ ἀνδρὸς ἐπαυρεῖ—

Oft a whole city pays for one man's sin.

And—

Quicquid delirant reges, plectuntur Achivi.

The Greeks are punish'd for their chieftains' crimes.

This imputation of the first transgression is usually proved from Rom. v. 12—14, where the Apostle gives a reason why death prevails over all men, viz. because "all have sinned."

But that the force of this argument may be understood, it may be observed, *first*, that the words alluded to are introduced by Paul for the purpose of illustrating and confirming the doctrine of justification, because it seemed a strange thing that the righteousness of Christ should be imputed to his people; the Apostle therefore shows that it is no more strange, than that Adam's sin should be imputed to his posterity. Again, *to sin* in these passages does not signify *to suffer punishment;* for although *sin* is unquestionably sometimes taken for the *punishment of sin*, yet it is no where read that *he* sins, who suffers punishment without desert; and even were it otherwise, an attentive reader will observe, that the word cannot be so understood in the passages in question, for it would make the meaning of the Apostle ridiculous and unworthy of his wisdom. *Thirdly, to sin* does not here simply denote corruption, or the *habit of sin*, but to commit some *actual sin;* for it is one thing to be, or to be born a sinner, and another to sin in act and deed. Now if death passed upon all men because all have sinned, and if it must be said that Adam's posterity sinned in act and deed, when they did not yet exist, we conclude that they are said to *have sinned*, because they are considered in Adam, and are reckoned to have committed sin, because he committed it. But how can this be, without allowing the imputation of sin? *Fourthly*, it is contended that the expression ἐφ' ᾧ may be rendered *in whom*, as well as *for that* (all have sinned,) and it is so rendered in other passages of the New Testament. Now if this be the true rendering, Adam's posterity cannot be said to have sinned in him, except his sin is imputed to them.

This imputation is further proved from the 17th, 18th, and 19th verses of the same chapter; but it is particularly confirmed by the comparison which the Apostle, treating of justification, here draws between Adam and Christ; whence he calls Adam "the figure of him that was to come;" for we are made sinners in Adam in the same way, in which we are made righteous in Christ, viz. by the imputation of his righteousness. Therefore we are made sinners in Adam by the imputation of his sin, for "by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men unto condemnation, and by one man's disobedience many were made sinners." The same point is established from 1 Cor. xv. 22, "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive;" for these words appear to mean, not merely that we derive from Adam original sin, which is the cause of death; since in this point of view we might be said to die in our parents, as we derive original sin from them, which yet we no where read of;—the conclusion therefore is, that if all men die, only because they have sinned, they must be said to have sinned in him, in whom they all thus die. Now we all die in Adam—therefore we all sinned in Adam. Divines further prove the doctrine from the consideration, that if Adam's sin is not imputed to his posterity, no reason can be given, why God should have permitted that hereditary and inherent corruption to be transmitted from parents to children; for this is a very great evil, which God would not have allowed to be extended to innocent persons, but only as a punishment for some sin, which can be no other than the sin of Adam.

Nor ought it to be a matter of surprise that Adam's sin should have been imputed to his posterity, when they were not yet born, and therefore had not consented to his sin. For Adam must be considered as the root, the father, the head, or chief, of the human race, for it was in this relation, or with this understanding, that he entered into covenant with God, and God with him. Besides, there is nothing we read of more frequently in the sacred volume, than such imputations of guilt. Thus God punished the Israelites for Achan's sin, and imputed to them the sin of this individual; for he says—"Israel hath sinned, and they have transgressed my covenant; they have taken of the accursed thing." (Josh. vii. 11.) God punished the Israelites with three years' famine, because Saul had injured the Gibeonites contrary to his

solemn agreement; and in the general deluge, and in the burning of Sodom, children perished for the guilt of their parents. For the sin of Ham, his son Canaan and all his posterity were reduced to slavery. (Gen. ix. 25.) All the first-born of the Egyptians were destroyed for Pharaoh's rebellion. For the abominations of the Canaanites, their wives and children were devoted to destruction. (Deut. xx. 16.) The Amalekites, four hundred years after they had opposed the Israelites during their journey from Egypt, were destroyed by Saul, at the command of God. (1 Sam. xv. 2, 3.) We read the following curse in Lev. xxvi. 38, 39, "Ye shall perish among the heathen, and the land of your enemies shall eat you up. And they that are left of you shall pine away in their iniquity in your enemies' lands; and in (or because of) the iniquities of their fathers shall they pine away with them." Our Saviour also declares to the Jews, that upon them should come the punishment of those sins which had been committed long before by their fathers. (Matt. xxiii. 35.) Indeed, this imputation of the parents' sin to their children, is proved by that threatening in the law, that God would "visit the iniquity of the fathers upon the children," (Exod. xx. 5,) which must not be merely understood of children who follow the bad examples of their parents; for most of the examples just brought forward prove the contrary; and besides, if this were the meaning of the law, it would not be the sins of the fathers which God visited, but those of the children. Nor was this fact altogether unknown to the heathens; hence we have the following record of the Delphic oracle—

At scelerum auctores divinum persequitur jus,
Nec pote vitari, non si genus a Jove ducant,
Sed capiti ipsorum, quique enascuntur ab illis
Imminet, inque domo cladem subit altera clades.

Justice divine pursues the guilty heads,
Nor can they 'scape, not e'en if sprung from Jove;
O'er them it hangs, and o'er their guiltless sons—
Stroke after stroke falls on the hapless race.

We acknowledge, indeed, that it is difficult to conceive how God imputes the sin of Adam to his unborn posterity. But it is far more difficult to conceive how God permits the descendants of Adam to be born with that depravity, which is the effect of the first transgres-

sion, if that transgression is not imputed to them in any way; for this corruption is the greatest of all evils, being the fountain and origin of all sin, and consequently the cause of man's everlasting destruction. Who, indeed, can conceive that God, who could by various means have prevented this propagation of sin, if he had chosen, should yet have chosen that all should be born corrupt from one corrupt man, and that our whole race should be infected with sin, and incur eternal wrath, had he not been pleased to execute an act of his justice upon man, on account of some sin before committed by Adam, and imputed to his posterity? In this matter, indeed, we must adore the judgment of God, and hold our peace, saying only, *O the depth!*

CHAPTER V.

OF ORIGINAL SIN.

We now proceed to show that the *corruption* of Adam was transmitted to his posterity; first observing, that this corruption goes by the name of *original sin*, a term first employed by Augustine against the Pelagians, signifying that corruption is inherent in us from our birth, from the very moment we begin to exist. Cyprian called it *malum domesticum* (*a domestic or family evil.*) That it really exists may be proved by many arguments. The *first* is taken from Psalm li. 5, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." In these words David traces the *actual* sin he had committed to its original source, and confesses that he was corrupt from his very birth; for surely so much is implied in the expressions, *shapen* and *conceived* in iniquity; now this is original sin. The argument will appear to us still more valid by considering that David is here confessing *his own* sin, not that of any other person, such as his father or mother.

The *second* argument is derived from John iii. 6, " That which is born of the flesh, is flesh." The term

flesh here signifies our unregenerate nature, as it is also taken in Rom. viii. 8; Gal. v. 19. If, therefore, every one that is born of the flesh, as all men are, is flesh, namely, corrupt; then there will be no single human being free from this natural corruption. The *third* argument is drawn from the curse of death, which belongs to all; for death reigns even over infants, and therefore sin must necessarily be in them, for death can be only "the wages of sin." *By what justice*, says Fulgentius, *is a child subject to the wages of sin, if there is no pollution of sin in him?* We do not indeed deny that children are said, in various passages of scripture, to be *innocent;* but they are not so called because they are free from all sin, but only in comparison with adult persons, who sin actually and grievously. Again, they are called *holy*, 1 Cor. vii. 14, not because they are free from all corruption, but because they are born within the church, out of which those who live are profane and unclean. The *fourth* argument is drawn from the consideration, that, if infants were not born corrupted by original sin, they would have no need of Christ as a Redeemer: for, where there is no sin, there is no need of redemption. The *fifth* argument is drawn from the universal corruption of mankind; for this corruption proves that the very nature which we derive from the first parent, is faulty in its very beginning; otherwise, in so great a multitude of human beings, one at least would be found, to whom at his birth nature had been more favourable and kind, and who therefore would be holy. The *sixth* argument is drawn from the administration of circumcision formerly, and now of baptism, to infants; both these sacraments being seals of the righteousness of faith, and of remission of sins, certainly not *actual* sin in infants, therefore *original*. The *seventh* argument arises from experience, which proves this secret corruption to be innate, even in infants. For how comes it that sins show themselves in children, as soon as reason commences, yea, even before, and grow and increase of their own accord to such an extent, that by the most diligent care of instructers, they can hardly be lopped off, much less rooted out. Of this depravity of nature they sometimes complained, who had nothing but the wisdom of nature to guide them. Thus Cicero laments that *man is introduced into life by his step-mother Nature, with a body, naked, frail, and weak, with a mind anxious at troubles, dejected by fears, effeminate to la-*

bours, prone to evil passions, in which the celestial fire of genius and intellect is smothered. And such was the opinion of the orthodox fathers, as is evident from their writings, and also of the various Christian councils. We only add, that it should not appear strange that original sin is not among the prohibitions of the law, because the law supposes man to be holy.

With respect to the nature of original sin, we must observe that it does not consist in the corruption of the very substance of the soul, because every substance is created by God (who is not the author of sin,) and because the scripture makes a distinction between our nature and the sin that is inherent in it; and moreover, if this were the case, Christ would have taken sin upon himself, when he took our nature. And it would also follow, that man, when he is regenerated, becomes essentially different from the being he was before. We observe also, that original sin does not mean merely the being destitute of original righteousness, but also that universal disorder which came into the place of original righteousness: it is not only the want of wisdom in the mind, and rectitude in the will, but it is blindness and error in the understanding, perverseness in the will, alienation from the chief good, inability to do good, and inclination to do evil.

Only Jesus Christ was free from this corruption, for he did not descend from Adam in the ordinary way, but was conceived in an extraordinary and miraculous manner, by the power of the Holy Ghost. Therefore the blessed Virgin, his mother, was not free from this sin, for this is nowhere asserted in scripture; and besides, she acknowledged that she needed a Saviour, which she would not have done had she not been a sinner. She also died, like other sinners. It was the clear opinion of the ancients, that Christ was the only exception to the general rule. Thus Augustine speaks, *It remains to say, whether there is, or ever can be, any mortal man, who hath, or will have, no sin at all.* Here was a fair opportunity for excepting the Virgin. But he goes on, *It is most certain, that there neither is, nor has been, nor will be, any one* (free from sin) *except the one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.* To the same effect is the testimony of Ambrose, Cyril, Tertullian, and others.

This sin is inherent in the whole of man, both in his soul and in his body; nor is it *voluntary*, in the sense in

which we commonly say that a thing is voluntary; though it may be called so, inasmuch as it affects the will, and defiles it. It is not, indeed, necessary that any thing should proceed from the will, in order to constitute sin: for there are many sins that are sins of ignorance. This original sin is very often called *lust*, which John reduces to three heads—"the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life." (1 John ii. 16.) It is sin not only in the unregenerate and unbelieving, but also in the regenerate and faithful; nor is it only a disease or infirmity of nature, as is evident from Paul's giving it continually the name of *sin*, (Rom. vi. and vii,) not only because it is of sin, or inclines to sin, but because it actually opposes the law of the mind, and the law of the very first constitution of things, and resists the Spirit, in which thing the true nature of sin consists: in short, it is sin, and produces sin. (James i. 15.)

As to the manner in which original sin is propagated, it is a most difficult question, in resolving which divines have always laboured, and will always labour, without being able to satisfy themselves; and there is no one who is not compelled to say with Augustine, *What is the truth, I would more willingly learn, than say, lest I should venture to say what I know not.* All that we may venture to advance on this subject is, that an infant, while in the womb of its mother, and therefore most intimately united to her, has the same impressions made upon its brain or heart by different objects, as are made upon the brain or heart of its mother. We know that the soul and body are so closely united, that the ideas of the former, and the motions of the latter, mutually affect each other; whence it may follow, that the motions which take place in the brain of infants, and make impressions on it, have the same influence on them as they have on their mothers, namely, bind down their newly-created souls to sensible and carnal objects. This may be illustrated by the following example: supposing God to place a body, into which he intended to breathe also a soul, in the midst of some burning liquid; the very moment the soul entered that body, it would be sensible of a very grievous pain. Thus it is that the body of the infant in its mother's womb is moved in the same way as the body of its mother, who sins every moment; and therefore from the time that the soul enters the body so affected, the same affections or inclinations are stirred up within it,

as are stirred up in the mother, according to the corresponding motions of the body;—in some such way as this we imagine that sin is propagated.

We shall only add, that it is no wonder that man, from the time of his birth, becomes continually more and more corrupt; for he sees nothing but bad examples, which surround him on every side, and by the most powerful influence urge him to what is sinful; while he himself, possessing no resources within his own heart, becomes as it were the sport of every sin.

CHAPTER VI.

OF ACTUAL SIN.

From an impure fountain only impure streams can flow, and a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit. From *original* sin therefore proceeds *actual* sin, which is nothing else than a *deviation* or *wandering from the law of God.* There are various kinds of actual sin, which must be considered separately. *First*, there is the sin of *omission*, and of *commission;* the former is that by which the good commanded is left undone, the latter, by which the evil forbidden is done; for although the omission of the act commanded is not strictly an act itself, and therefore does not *appear* to be actual sin, yet it is properly so called, both because that sin of omission is rather connected with some internal act of the mind, whereby the sinner *wills* the omission of the precept, or is referred to some preceding act, which is the cause or occasion of the act being omitted, and also, because by such omission man deviates from the law, and is liable to its curse. We may also observe on this head—that a sin of commission is very often the occasion of a sin of omission, as *surfeiting* may be the cause of *neglecting* divine worship. Also, that in every actual sin there may be traced both omission and commission, and that

the sin of omission deserves a very severe punishment. "Every tree that *bringeth not forth good fruit* is hewn down, and cast into the fire." Matt. iii. 10.

Secondly, there is the sin of the *heart*, of the *mouth*, and of the *deed*. The sins of the *heart* are "evil thoughts," (Matt. xv. 19; Prov. vi. 18; Matt. v. 28.") The sins of the *mouth* are evil words, such as blasphemies, perjuries, lies, &c., and even "idle words," (Matt. xii. 36.) The sins of *deed* are outward actions, visibly and sensibly performed, (if we may so express it;) though, let it be observed, that these kinds of sin often involve each other, so that what are done in act, have been first conceived in the heart. Under this head may also come the distinction between sins of "the flesh," and sins of "the spirit;" not indeed as if the sin of the flesh was performed by the flesh only; for the flesh and spirit mutually act on each other, and without the latter the former cannot perform any evil deed:—but we call the sins of the spirit, those which for the most part take place in the spirit or heart of man, and to the performance of which, the members of the body, though often the cause of carnal actions, are not absolutely necessary; such as the sins of *ambition*, *pride*, *hatred*, *envy*, &c., which therefore are numbered with "the works of the flesh," (Gal. v. 19.) But the sins of the flesh are those which are committed with the members of the body also, and cannot be committed without them, such as *murder*, *adultery*, *theft*, &c.

Thirdly, schoolmen make a distinction between sin *of itself*, and sin *accidentally*. The former is that which is absolutely forbidden by the law. The latter is that which is good in itself, but is done in an evil manner; as alms-giving practised through ostentation; in this point of view the works of the heathens have been called *splendid sins*. It is a more accurate way of speaking to say, that there is a distinction between sin, as to *the essence of the deed*, and sin as to *the circumstances of the deed*, for since the essence of things moral is principally made up of circumstances, every sin appears to be sin *of itself*, or *absolutely*.

Fourthly, there is sin of *ignorance*, and *wilful* sin. The former is that which is occasioned only by ignorance, and which is not committed by any one knowingly, (Lev. iv. 2; Numb. xxxv. 11.) Such was the sin of Paul in persecuting the church, (1 Tim. i. 13.) But here we must distinguish between ignorance of things

which we are bound to know, and ignorance of things which we are not thus bound to know. The latter is altogether *involuntary* and *invincible*, where a man is ignorant of what he cannot know, because the object is not revealed to him; the former is voluntary and *vincible;* and it is either *deliberate*, where a man is not willing to be instructed in the divine commandments, and that in order that he may more carelessly rush into sin, as those who say, "Depart from us; we desire not the knowledge of thy ways," (Job xxi. 14,) or it arises from *negligence*, where a man does not use that diligence which he ought, and which he could use. Now ignorance of things which we are not bound to know, which ignorance is invincible, clears us from the charge of sin, except, the ignorance being removed, we approve of any act we have done through it; but deliberate and vincible ignorance, or that which arises from negligence, is sin, although the one may be more blamable than the other. Under this head we may also reckon *reigning* sin, and sin that does *not reign;* the former is that which has gained strength by inveterate habit, so as to hold a man in complete bondage; it is found in those who are said to "commit sin." (1 John iii. 8.) Sin that does *not reign* is that which is committed from inadvertence, or from some sudden emotion, and which a man resists either in the very act, or after the act. Among the former kind are reckoned those which are called "crying sins," as the shedding of innocent blood, (Gen. iv. 10,)—the keeping back the hire of the labourers by fraud, (James v. 4,)—the affliction or oppression of the poor, &c. (Exod. iii. 7; xxii. 23,)—the sin of the Sodomites. (Gen. xviii. 20.)

Fifthly, there is the sin of *infirmity*, which daily arises from ignorance, or from any sudden and unguarded affection preventing the judgment, as sudden fear, anger, pleasure, or pain; and it is called a sin of *infirmity*, because we are in this case induced to sin, not so much by the will, as by the weakness of our nature, hurried away by our passions or affections; although it is certain that no actual sin can be said to be absolutely and altogether *involuntary;* for the will has either not done what it ought, or hath done what it ought not. There is also the sin of *malice* or *wilfulness*, which is committed with deliberation, with a fixed purpose, and with a full consent of the mind. (Psalm xix. 13.) Now it is plain that the will has fully consented to the deed, when the offender is not hurried away by any violent affection,

but has time for mature consideration, and to discover the wickedness of the deed which he purposes to perform.

Sixthly, there is *pardonable* and *unpardonable* sin, (Matt. xii. 31, 32); the former is the "sin unto death," the latter the "sin not unto death." (1 John v. 16, 17.) Sin is called *unpardonable*, and "unto death," which is never forgiven by God, as final impenitence, and sin against the Holy Ghost, of which we shall speak hereafter. *Pardonable* sin is that which can be forgiven by God, though it deserves death. For we know that there are no sins which are not of their own nature deserving of death—"the wages of sin is death." (Rom. vi. 23.) "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." (Gal. iii. 10.) "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." (James ii. 10.) For every sin is contrary to the divine glory; disturbs the order appointed by God; opposes the love of God; and violates his law, which commands us to love him with all our heart. It must not, however be concluded from this, that we maintain with the Stoics, the equality of all sins; as though we believed that the man who steals herbs out of his neighbour's garden, sins as greatly as the man who offers incense to idols, or imbrues his hands in the blood of his parent. We grant that sins are unequal, but we maintain that they all deserve death.

Now that there is an inequality in sins cannot be denied. There are some sins which more deeply wound and injure the conscience; which prevent the operation of justifying faith; and which, if we may be allowed so to speak, constitute an entire unfitness for the kingdom of heaven, such as those alluded to in 1 Cor. vi. 10. Col. iii. 5. There are others which do not hinder the operation of faith, nor take away the hope of obtaining forgiveness, such as the rebellious motions of inward lust. Some sins are in scripture compared to a *beam*, others to a *mote*, (Luke vi. 41,) some to a *camel*, others to a *gnat*, (Matt. xxiii. 24). That sin is *light*, which is committed through ignorance; that is heavier, which is committed through contempt of God; sin against God is heavier than sin against man, but although some are greater and some less than others, we are not from thence to conclude that we are allowed to commit them: for nothing forbidden by God should appear light or

small. At the same time, a sin which is otherwise very small, when committed deliberately, is rendered great, and the intention of committing a sin that is light in itself, renders us more guilty than the heaviest sin to which we are hurried on by the violence of any passion hence it is that God has most severely punished many sins which seem small to us. The man, for gathering sticks on the sabbath-day, was stoned by the command of God. (Numb. xv. 32—36.) Moses, for smiting the rock twice with his rod without divine authority, was excluded from the land of Canaan. (Numb. xx. 11, 12.) Uzzah, for touching the ark, was instantly punished with death. (2 Sam. vi. 6—9.) Augustine, therefore, excellently observes, *In weighing sins, let us not bring deceitful scales in which we may weigh what we wish, and how we wish, at our own pleasure, saying, This (sin) is heavy, that is light; but let us bring the divine balances from the sacred scriptures, as out of the treasury of the Lord, and in them let us weigh our sins, or rather not weigh, but acknowledge them to have been already weighed by the Lord himself.*

CHAPTER VII.

OF SIN AGAINST THE HOLY GHOST.

THAT there is a sin of this nature, is clear from the words of scripture, (Matt. xii. 31—37,) "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men," &c. John calls it "a sin unto death," (1 John v. 16,) and the apostle seems to speak of it in Heb. x. 26, "If we sin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment," &c. and in the twenty-ninth verse, it is called a "treading under foot the Son of God, counting the blood of the covenant an unholy thing, and doing despite unto the Spirit of grace." It is very difficult to determine what

is the nature of this sin; but in order that we may examine into it, let us ascertain first, what it is not; and we shall then more easily discover what it is.

In proving the negative, we observe—1. That they do not sin against the Holy Ghost, who break the commandments of the moral law; otherwise all men would be guilty of this sin, and none would have any hope of pardon. 2. They are not guilty of it, who reject evangelical truth through ignorance and unbelief; for although this is a very great sin, God hath not made any law that such offenders shall be without hope of pardon; on the contrary, he often brings many of them to the true faith. 3. They are not guilty of it who profess false religions, as the Pagans and Mahometans; for it evidently appears that those only can sin against the Holy Ghost, who live under the dispensation of the gospel. 4. Neither do they commit it, who have contracted any habit of sinning, and take pleasure in it; for although this habit is incompatible with real regeneration, the grace of God can change and subdue it, and it often happens that such persons are converted. 5. Neither those who through fear of death, or any great calamity, deny Christ, or offer incense to idols, and bow the knee to Baal; for, strictly speaking, such persons do not sin voluntarily, but, we may say, partly voluntarily, and partly involuntarily; being as one who throws his cargo overboard to avoid being shipwrecked; and therefore when fear is removed from such offenders, they will of their own accord return to God, and their sins will be taken away through repentance, followed by a sense of the divine mercy; thus Peter, who denied Christ, cannot be said to have sinned against the Holy Ghost; and therefore he immediately repented of his sin, which did not prevent him from afterwards becoming a distinguished minister of Christ. 6. Nor do those persons necessarily sin against the Holy Ghost, who forsake Christ for the love of gain and worldly goods, as Demas, who "loved the present world;" or some temporary professors, in whom the deceitfulness of riches and the cares of the world choke the good seed. This denial, indeed, is more sinful than the former kind; for the objects of our fear, such as torture and death, are of such a kind as to oppose themselves to our very nature, and therefore it is not strange that nature should recoil from them, whereas we can easily do without great riches and honours, which are objects of our hope and desire;

still, as it is not impossible for such men as have thus fallen to return to Christ, and to abhor their guilt, as experience sometimes proves, we cannot therefore believe that they have committed the sin against the Holy Ghost. 7. This sin is not final impenitence, as was the opinion of St. Augustine; for all those that are not saved die in this latter sin, and yet all these cannot be said to have sinned against the Holy Ghost.

What then *is* this sin? Here is the difficult question. But if we go by the scripture, it is evident, 1. That this sin is committed by those, who know the truth of the gospel, for it is said of them that they "have been enlightened," i. e. in the knowledge of the gospel doctrine, that they "have tasted the heavenly gift, were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come." (Heb. vi. 4, 5;) they are said, also, elsewhere to "have received the knowledge of the truth;" all which things prove that they are so acquainted with the truth, as to be convinced of its excellence, and to be unable even to open their mouth against it, however they may wish it. 2. This sin is committed by those, who have received some grace of the Holy Spirit; and this may be signified by their "having been made partakers of the Holy Ghost;" although this may be understood of miraculous gifts. But here we must observe that the grace of the Holy Spirit is of various kinds. For sometimes it simply restrains the impetuous passions of sinners, so that they abstain from grosser offences, and are kept within the bounds of external decency; in this way many of the heathens were restrained; and sometimes it penetrates further into the heart, and convinces men of the truth and excellence of the gospel, adding various motives by which they should be induced to embrace or hold fast the gospel. Sometimes it thoroughly persuades them, leads them to true holiness, and fills them with solid consolation. Now that those who sin against the Holy Ghost, have received convincing grace, is plain from the description given of them, as having "tasted the good word of God." 3. This sin is voluntary, for they are said to sin "wilfully," (Heb. x. 26,) i. e. from the heart, contrary to the light of conscience. 4. It is a total falling away from, and denial of, the truth, which the sacred writer appears to intimate, when he says that they "tread under foot the Son of God," &c. 5. This falling away is joined with *contempt* of the truth, hence they

are compared with those "who despised Moses' law," (Heb. x. 28,) and with Esau, "who, for one morsel of meat despised his birthright." (Heb. xii. 16.) 6. This contempt is sometimes joined with *hatred*, when they perceive that the gospel is contrary to their passions, and hence they often inveigh against it, and impugn those who defend its truth; thus the Pharisees, upon whom Christ charges this awful sin, persecuted his doctrine with a deadly hatred; and this is necessarily implied by the term *blasphemy*, by which name this sin is designated, as also by the term *despite*, which is elsewhere used. 7. Those who commit this sin, persist and are confirmed in it, whence it is said, "it is impossible for them to be renewed again unto repentance." (Heb. vi. 4.) From all that has been said then, the sin against the Holy Ghost may be defined to be, "a wilful rejection and total renunciation of the gospel truth once known, joined with a confirmed hatred and contempt, and often persecution of it, and this not for a time, but constantly, even to the end of life."

But here different questions arise, *First*, How is it possible, that a man who knows the truth and excellence of the gospel, should yet afterwards deny, despise, hate, and persecute it? We reply, that this ought not to appear strange, because those temporary professors who fall into this sin, embrace the gospel, not so much out of regard to its intrinsic value, as for something that is good and pleasant, which attracts them either by its novelty, or sweetness, or the majesty of its doctrines, or rather, as something that is useful, and capable of conferring upon them some substantial benefit; hence it appears that they are influenced more by selfish motives, than by love for the gospel. It is no wonder, therefore, that they forsake the gospel, when they find that they cannot profess the truth which it teaches, without restraining their passions, renouncing their pleasures, exposing themselves to persecution, enduring many evils, and subjecting themselves to various reproaches. For they find that they have been greatly deceived in imagining, that, in embracing the gospel, they could keep Christ and the world, the gospel and their own interest, all at the same time in possession; therefore, when persecution comes on, those who had no higher and better object in view, than to obtain the advantages of the present life, without caring for the future, voluntarily forsake Christ, and that too with a kind of rage and indig-

nation at the thought that they were nearly losing for the sake of Christ, their own ease, honour, glory, happiness, and everything else which occupied the chief place in their affections. Again, it must be observed that all this does not take place at once, but gradually, for no one reaches at once to the height of depravity.

Secondly, it is inquired, why this sin is called the sin against the Holy Ghost? We reply, not because it merely offends against the third person of the Trinity, for all sins are against the whole three adorable persons; but because it is committed against that peculiar operation of the Spirit which belongs to him in the economy of grace, viz. the illumination of the mind. *Thirdly*, it is inquired, whether this sin can apply to all men. We answer that it cannot apply to the elect and faithful, who, on account of God's love towards them, cannot fall into so deadly a sin, as will appear, when we come to speak of their perseverance. Nor does it apply to those who do not know the gospel, but to those whom we call temporary professors, who receive the word with joy, but afterwards renounce it. A *fourth* question is, whether any persons are still found who may fall into this sin? The ground of any doubt on this head is, that Christ appears to charge with this sin, those only who ascribed the miraculous works which he performed to the devil, while all the time they were either persuaded that such works were done by a divine power, or at least were unable by any experience or argument to prove what they asserted with so much boldness and impiety. Many therefore, after Jerome, Athanasius, Ambrose, and Basil, maintain that the sin of which Christ speaks, (Matt. xii. 31,) is not the same as that of which Paul and John speak. They believe that the sin of which the apostle treats in Heb. vi. and x. is the sin of the Jews, who, after having received miraculous gifts in their baptism, returned to the synagogue, renounced Christianity, and cursed Christ; and that the sin of which John treats, is the sin of those, who remaining in the outward profession of Christianity, persisted in some grievous sin, which brought upon them the excommunication of the church. But this opinion is perhaps more refined than solid. We think it far more probable that Christ and his apostles allude to the same sin, though we grant that there may be various species of it. We believe, then, that this sin was not only committed by the Pharisees, but that it may be seen in the present day committed by

many; for there are many who "sin wilfully after having received the knowledge of the truth, and count the blood of Christ an unholy thing," which is the description of this sin, as given by the apostle. This is further evident from the circumstance of this sin being set forth as the most grievous of all sins; now it is certain that the sin of Christians who renounce, hate, despise, and persecute the truth once known, is greater than that of the Pharisees, who blasphemed the miracles of Christ, being blinded by many prejudices, and by their own malice and envy; and that they are far greater offenders, who crucify Christ afresh after having acknowledged him for the true Messiah, than those, who originally crucified him as an impostor.

This sin is said to be unpardonable; "it shall not be forgiven," says Christ, "either in this world, or in the world to come." For there can be no remission where there is no repentance, and it is plain from the Apostle, that such persons cannot be "renewed unto repentance." (Heb. vi. 6.) Neither does the justice of God permit, that they should obtain pardon. And here the learned observe that the Apostle uses the word ἀνακαινίζειν (*to renew*) in the active sense, thereby signifying that this impossibility of renewal does not refer to the sin as being in itself unpardonable, but to God himself as being unable as it were to bring himself to cure and destroy it in such persons. He who has broken the laws of the Father, may find a remedy in the satisfaction of the Son. He who hath through ignorance and unbelief offended against the person of the Son, has some hope left him in the grace of the Spirit, who can dispel his ignorance, and subdue his unbelief. But he who does despite unto the Spirit, can expect no further remedy of grace. Let every one, therefore, study to avoid this awful sin, and diligently shun every thing which appears to lead to it, such as the disregarding of conscience, and of God who speaks by it, the abuse of the truth for worldly purposes, self-love, the love of the world, and worldly objects, perseverance in sin, contrary to the struggles of conscience, in short, every thing by which the devil insensibly leads us astray, and which grieves the Holy Spirit of God.

CHAPTER VIII.

OF MAN'S FREE WILL IN THE STATE OF SIN.

We have before treated of man's free will in his state of innocence, and we then observed that his freedom consisted in his voluntary acting with judgment, not compelled by any other agent; and that such liberty is so essential to a rational creature, that without it such a creature cannot be conceived of in any state whatever; therefore when man became a sinner, he did not lose this freedom, since he could not lose it without ceasing to be man. But besides this *essential* freedom, we may say that innocent man possessed also another kind, viz. freedom from the slavery of sin; now this we maintain that he lost, when he fell from a state of innocence. For free-will is usually distinguished into *essential* and *accidental*: the former is that by which man can act without compulsion, under the guidance of his mind and judgment; the latter, by which he can act as freely as his *habits* permit him to do. Now man lost not the *first* of these, but the *second*, and that only in relation to what is *good*, since his *habits* became evil. Hence his posterity are born the slaves of sin; they are not, indeed, without that natural power of willing which is essential to man, but they abuse it only to the purposes of sin, and they labour under an absolute inability to that which is good.

It is true, that in natural things man has the same powers now that he had when innocent; he can exercise them, or not, at his pleasure; thus he can *eat, drink, sleep*, &c. In civil matters also, those which relate to the conduct of human life, we allow that he has some powers remaining, although very much weakened, since even in these matters his mind is in many respects blind, and his will corrupted by the fall; so that he commits various errors in choosing and rejecting; but with regard to *moral* and *spiritual* good, we consider that man is so corrupt of his own nature, that he can do nothing acceptable in the sight of God. Now this is proved by many testimonies of scripture. First, from

those passages in which *ability* or *power* is expressly declared not to be in man, as when it is said that he "cannot know the things of God, cannot subject himself to the law of God, can do nothing without Christ, nothing of himself, cannot bring forth good fruit," &c. (1 Cor. ii. 14; Rom. viii. 7; John xv. 5; 2 Cor. iii. 5; Matt. vii. 18.)

There are passages, also, which represent man as a *servant* of sin and of the devil, such a servant as is bound with the chains of his lusts, the "servant of corruption," (2 Pet. ii. 19,) who cannot be set at liberty except by Christ; now servitude or slavery implies, both a perpetual necessity of obligation, till deliverance takes place, and the devoting of every work and action to the service of the master. It appears, then, that the sinner has no moral power to deliver himself from this slavery, or to do any thing in which he is not wholly subject to the master whom he serves, namely, sin. There are passages also in which man's understanding is described as *blind*, *darkened*, nay *darkness* itself, (Eph. v. 8,) his *heart deceitful and desperately wicked*, (Jer. xvii. 9;) *hard as adamant*, (Zech. vii. 12;) *stony*, (Ezek. xxxvi. 26.) Now what do these expressions denote, but that he has no strength for heavenly things, either in his understanding, or in his will; and that he can neither understand nor do good without divine aid; for a *stony* heart can convey no other idea than that of a heart *insensible*, *inflexible*, *earthly*, destitute of life.

A further argument arises from those passages in which man is said to be *dead*, (Eph. ii. 1,) not merely on account of the afflictions to which he is liable, nor on account of the mortality of his body, or the troubles of his conscience, but because of the dissolution of that union with God, and the want of that holiness, in which true life consists; hence it is plain that a sinner has no more power to convert himself, than a dead man has to raise himself to life. It is true there is a great difference between the one and the other; in bodily death the man is destitute of all power to act; in spiritual death he is destitute only of power to do what is good: in the former the faculties are taken away, in the latter only the rectitude of them; in the one a man is not bound to quicken himself, in the other he is so bound; nevertheless the resemblance consists in this, that, as a dead man is deprived of the life of nature, and consequently of all motion and feeling, so the sinner is destitute of the

life of grace, and consequently has lost all spiritual motion and feeling.

The truth is further established by joining together all the expressions already brought forward, and others of the same import, which will give the force of a demonstration. The scripture, then, calls the sinner a *slave*, but a slave who cannot escape by flight, because he is a *captive*, a captive who cannot pay the price of his ransom, because he is a *debtor*, a debtor, who has not become so by misfortune, but from guilt, for he is a *criminal*, but not only a criminal, who may be in good health and at ease, but also a *sick or diseased* person, not, however, such a sick man as can call in the aid of a physician, but one who is sunk into a *deep sleep*, yet not so that he can presently awake, for he is also *dead;* and not like a dead man who can do no harm, but one who is an enemy and a rebel against God. We may, finally, adduce all those expressions which the scripture makes use of to describe the work of conversion, calling it a *creation*, a *resurrection*, a *regeneration*, the producing of a *new heart;* all which most clearly imply the entire inability of the sinner to contribute any thing at all to this new creation, or resurrection of himself.

But this impotence of the sinner does not excuse him in sinning, since it is not *involuntary* and merely *physical*, arising from a defect of natural power, but *voluntary* and *moral*, arising from a depraved nature. To say that man can do nothing but what is evil, is the same as saying, that man is so delighted with sin, that he is unwilling to cease from it. Besides, this impotence is increased in man by the frequent commission of sin, against the dictates of his own conscience; hence he gets so accustomed to sin, that habit becomes a second nature; and this seems to be the true reason why sin is called the *old man*. God therefore justly punishes those whose impotence is such as this. He, indeed, who punishes another, for not doing what he could not in any way do, though he wished it, punishes unjustly. But God punishes men, because they have not done those things which they ought to have done, but which they were wholly unwilling to do, and because they have done a great many things which they might have easily avoided.

From what has been said it appears, that all the works which we perform without the grace of God, are sins; and therefore that those works of the heathens, which

are called virtues, were *splendid sins.* For to make a work good three things are required. 1. It must proceed from a heart purified through faith; now who will assert that those who worshipped false gods, and knew not the will of the true God, acted from a heart thus purified? 2. It must be done according to God's law, not only as to the outward act, but also as to the inward and spiritual compliance of the heart; but this was wanting in the heathens. 3. It must be directed to the glory of God; but here also they failed, because they "glorified not God, neither were they thankful;" they served their own ambitious ends, as it is said of them—

Vicit amor patriæ, laudumque immensa cupido.

Moved by their country's love, and thirst for praise.

But if there was any thing good in them,—and some did regard justice and goodness more than others—if Aristides was renowned for justice, Scipio for chastity, Socrates for wisdom, &c., this must be attributed to the divine influence of the Holy Spirit, who restrained the passions of some of them, and prevented them from breaking out, while others were permitted to indulge their passions, and to rush headlong into every vice. Hence Plato and Cicero once confessed that no one ever became a great man without a divine inspiration. Thus far concerning sin, and man's condition in respect to it.

CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY.

BOOK THE FIFTH.

OF THE DECREE OF GOD CONCERNING MAN'S SALVATION.

CHAPTER I.

OF ELECTION.

We have treated of man's fall, and have seen what this sin deserved, namely, eternal death. But we are not to conclude from this, that all mankind, being corrupted by sin, will perish everlastingly; for it was not the will of the Almighty Ruler of the world to devote all whom he created after his own image to eternal destruction. On the contrary, as he had foreseen their fall from all eternity, so he purposed before the foundation of the world to save some of them, and to leave others in their fallen condition. This truth is evident from innumerable passages of scripture, which teach us that salvation was from eternity designed for some, and not designed for others. Nor should it seem strange to any one that God has made a decree concerning the salvation of men, since, as we have already proved, no event takes place in time which was not decreed from eternity, and nothing happens in the world without the knowledge and the will of God.

But in order that we may rightly understand this decree, four things are to be observed:—1. That all mankind, all the posterity of Adam, are the objects of this divine decree. For God hath from everlasting determined with himself what he wills to be done in reference

to the salvation or condemnation of individuals. 2. That this decree of saving some, and passing by others, had a reference to mankind, as already created, and not merely as capable of being created. For a non-entity cannot be the subject of salvation, or perdition; and, also, if this were the case, God would have decreed the salvation and perdition of many persons, who never have been, nor will be created; but it would not become an all-wise Being to make useless decrees. 3. That God in his decree considered men not only as created, but also as fallen; for man created, and not yet fallen, cannot be an object worthy of hatred, but must necessarily be the object of divine love. Neither can God purpose to save any one who is not supposed to be in a lost state; for salvation implies previous liability to perdition. 4. That the scripture uses various terms to express this decree concerning human salvation, and particularly these four,—1. *Foreknowledge*, Rom. viii. 29; xi. 2; 1 Peter i. 2; in this last passage, however, some think that the apostle by foreknowledge means the love of God, which is the source and foundation of election. 2. *Predestination*, Eph. i. 5. Although this word in its greatest latitude signifies the operations of divine Providence in all things, as Acts iv. 18; 1 Cor. ii. 7. 3. *Purpose*, Eph. i. 11. 4. *Election*, Eph. i. 4. Between these terms some difference may be remarked. The sacred writers may use the word *purpose* to denote the certainty of the event; the words *foreknowledge* and *election* to distinguish the persons who are objects of the decree; and the word *predestination*, to signify the appointment of the various means by which the decree is executed. *Election* is the term we shall make use of in the following pages.

Now, with the Synod of Dort, we define election to be "the eternal and unchangeable decree of God, whereby, out of the whole race of mankind fallen from primitive innocence into sin and perdition by their own fault, he has, according to the free purpose of his will, and of his mere grace, destined to salvation a certain definite number of individuals, who were neither better nor worthier than the rest, but lay in the same state of sin and misery." But to examine into this more particularly, we observe, *first*, that this election is an *eternal* decree; so that it must be distinguished from another kind of election which takes place in time, and which is nothing more than either a calling to some civil or sacred office;

as Judas was said to be chosen "to the apostleship," (John vi. 70,) or the admission of any people into covenant with God, as the Israelites were said to be chosen by God; or that separation from this world which is made in certain persons, to whom God gives grace, and whom he brings to glory. Now that the decree of election is eternal, is unquestionably taught by Paul, when he says, that God "hath chosen us before the foundation of the world;" for by no other expression does the scripture usually designate *eternity*. Again, this election has for its object a certain definite number of individuals, for no one will imagine that all are elected. Indeed, the very term *election* shows that all are not chosen; and the scripture confirms the same truth, when it declares that "the names of some are written in heaven, and in the book of life," (Luke x. 20; Phil. iv. 3,) and that the names of others are not written in the book of life of the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." (Rev. xiii. 8; xvii. 8.) Further, let it be observed that God has decreed to save some men lying in the same abyss of misery as the rest, of his mere grace and favour, lest any one should imagine, that God hath chosen those only who he foresaw would be better and more deserving than others, and would believe, and perform good works. Now that neither faith nor good works foreseen are the cause of election, is proved—1. Because faith and obedience are the effects of election, therefore they cannot be the cause; and that they are the effects is evident from Rom. viii. 29, "whom he did predestinate, them he also called;" now men are called to faith; also from Eph. i. 4, "he hath chosen us that we *should be* holy," not. therefore, because we *were* holy; also from Acts xiii. 48, "as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed;" therefore they were not ordained because it was foreseen that they would believe. For nowhere in scripture does the word τεταγμενοι, *ordained*, signify *disposed*, *fit*, or *qualified*, as some would translate it. To these may be added the passage in 2 Tim. i. 9, where the apostle says that "God hath called us, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace." Now if we are not *called*, according to our own works, but according to the purpose of God, much less were we *elected* according to our own works. Again, if election were according to faith and works foreseen, there would be no difficulty in answering the question, why God chooses one, and not another? It

would be, because God foresaw that the former would believe, and that the latter would remain in unbelief: yet we no where read of this in Paul, nor in the other sacred writers; on the contrary, it is expressly declared, that "it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." (Rom. ix. 16.) Now should these words be understood of calling, as some explain them, the argument will still hold good from calling to election. This point will appear by considering, that election depends on the mere "good pleasure" of God's will; for no other cause of it is mentioned by Paul in Eph. i. 5, 9, and in other passages; and when our Saviour gives thanks to his Father for having "hid" his secrets "from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes," (Matt. xi. 25,) (which revelation is the execution of the decree of election,) he assigns no other cause for this than the good pleasure of God.

And let it be observed, that God in election is to be regarded in two characters, as a merciful Father who pities the miserable; and as an independent Lord, who has mercy on whom he will, "doing what he will with his own." If then it be asked, why God has elected some men? the reply is, it is the effect of the divine mercy towards the human race, whereby God would not have all to perish, though all had deserved to perish. But if it be further asked, why Peter was chosen rather than Judas? the reply is, that such was the pleasure of God; as if any one should ask why of the same lump of clay one vessel is made to honour, and another to dishonour: no cause for this is found in the lump of clay, but the whole cause is found in the will of the artificer. We have therefore cause to admire the great mercy of God towards men, in having been pleased to spare some although all were alienated from him, and children of wrath; and although he could have overwhelmed all with his most righteous anger, and left them in the pit of eternal destruction; and at the same time we have cause to adore with awe the supreme dominion of God over his creatures.

Once more we observe, that election includes two things, appointment to salvation, and appointment of the means of salvation. Now these means are the incarnation, death, satisfaction, &c. of Jesus Christ, who is therefore the *first* means of fulfilling the decree of election, as he is the meritorious cause of salvation; and also the blessings which he hath purchased as the gift of

the Spirit, effectual calling, justification, sanctification, &c. without which no salvation can be obtained. Hence we infer that, although election is not suspended upon our faith and works, yet salvation is decreed to no one but upon condition of faith and repentance; for he who has chosen us to salvation, hath also decreed that we shall not obtain this salvation without first believing, and obeying his commandments; and therefore every one whom God has elected will assuredly believe before he obtain the salvation to which he is appointed.

CHAPTER II.

OF THE IMMUTABILITY AND CERTAINTY OF ELECTION.

Election is certain and unchangeable, as may be proved by the three following arguments: *first*, from the connection that subsists between election and glory; for as many as are chosen will be crowned with glory hereafter. Now this connection is established in that golden chain, which the apostle makes in Rom. viii. 29, 30, " whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son; moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified." Now if election were not sure and certain, it might be possible that God would not bless with eternal happiness those whom he had foreknown. The *second* argument arises from this, that election is of the same character as the other decrees of God, which are unchangeable. "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." (Isaiah xlvi. 10.) "God is not a man, that he should lie, neither the son of man, that he should repent." (Numb. xxiii. 19.) "With him is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." (James i. 17.) And God is said, being "willing to shew the immutability of his counsel, to have confirmed it by an oath." (Heb. vi. 17.) And if "the gifts and calling of God are without repentance," (Rom. xi. 29,) why not also his election? If God changed his decrees, this

change would take place either because he could not foresee what would happen, through *ignorance*;—or because he could not accomplish his purpose, through *impotence*;—or because he would not do so, through *inconstancy* or *fickleness*. None of these things can be affirmed of a Being all-wise and powerful, supremely good and faithful. *To change and alter does not become even a good man, much less a God*, said Maximus Tyrius. And the divine Being may justly say of himself, what Jupiter says, according to Homer—

——*οὐ γὰρ ἐμὸν παλινάγρετον, ὀυδ 'απατηλον,*
Ουδ 'ατέλεύτητον ὅτι κεν κεφαλῆ κατανεύσω.

The nod that ratifies my will divine,
The faithful, sure, irrevocable sign.

The *third* argument is derived from this, that the names of the elect are said to be "written in heaven," and "in the book of life." Now by this writing or enrolment, the scripture usually signifies the certain and infallible performance of the divine decrees. Hence Christ exhorts his disciples to rejoice that their "names are written in heaven;" now it would not be so great a matter of joy, if that writing could easily be blotted out; though we may here observe, that in one sense a man's name can be blotted out of the book of life which was never written therein, since it is thereby shewn that it was not written which was believed to have been written there. "His part shall be taken away out of the book of life, and out of the holy city," not the part which he had, or would have had, but which he was thought to have. Hence some remark, that there are two kinds of this *writing*, one merely *human*, made by men, who reckon many hypocrites as true members of the church; the other *divine*, which has been made by an eternal and unchangeable decree of God; the former, as written by men, is often—the latter, as written by God, is never—destroyed. Here also we may add the remarks of the Jews, according to R. Kimchi, that those are said to *be blotted out*, who *are not written*.* And here we may

* A remark which is strongly confirmed by Psalm lxix. 8. "let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous." The latter clause in this verse may be considered as explanatory of the former.

take opportunity to observe, that the scripture mentions several divine books, such as the *book of Providence*, alluded to in Psalm cxxxix. 16, "in thy book all my members (or, all these things) were written:" the *books of judgment*, in which are written the deeds of every man; and the *book of life.* (Rev. xx. 12.) This last book is of three kinds—1. The book of natural life, of which Moses speaks, (Exod. xxxii. 32,) when he begs of God to blot him out of his book, that is, that he might die an untimely death. 2. The book of that life, which consists in communion with the people of God, of which Ezekiel speaks, (xiii. 9,) "they shall not be in the assembly of my people, neither shall they be written in the writing of the house of Israel." 3. The book of eternal life, alluded to in Luke x. 20; Phil. iv. 3; Rev. xiii. 8; xx. 12. Moreover, God is said to have books, by a metaphor or figure derived either from military affairs, in which the commander writes in a book the names of the soldiers enlisted; or from an album or note-book, in which we set down the names of our friends; or from the civil custom of enrolling the names of citizens. But to return from this digression.

To the three arguments already brought forward in favour of the certainty of election, may be added the well known passage in 2 Tim. ii. 19, "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his." By this *foundation* almost all divines understand the election of God, on which rests the whole of our salvation. But although we may admit that election can be rightly called the foundation of the church, and of all believers, who are set forth as a house, yet we think that the word *foundation* here does not mean *election;* but the *true believer*, as opposed to those temporary professors, whom Paul in the preceding verse describes as having "erred concerning the truth." Now the true believer is called a *foundation* in allusion to Prov. x. 25, where it is said, "the righteous is an everlasting foundation," that is, because he stands firmly built on a rock; he is not shaken, he does not waver; he is not moved away by any assaults of Satan, or the world; he lasts as long as the world, and is in some sense the foundation of the world. Hence the Jews said that *the world stood by reason of the righteous.* And Chrysostom interprets the meaning of the word to be *stable, or souls who stand fixed and immovable.* Yet although we do not understand election to be meant by this term, we

think that this passage contains a solid argument for the immutability of election; for the believer is called a foundation, because he is elected, and because his election is sure and immovable. This foundation is said *to have a seal*, alluding to the custom of the ancients, who inscribed certain sentences upon foundation-stones, by way of good omen; or else to the custom of men who *seal* those writings which they wish to be valid and binding. Now this seal contains a double security as it were for the full confirmation of faith, one on the part of God, the other on the part of man; for if the believer could fall away, this would take place, either because God forsook him, or because he himself became ungodly; but neither of these events could happen, according to Paul; not the first, for "the Lord," he says, "knoweth them that are his," i. e. he loves and defends them, having foreknown them from eternity; nor the second, for the same Lord provides or takes care that "every one that nameth the name of Christ," i. e. belongs to his people, shall, "depart from iniquity." We might also give another exposition of this passage, taking the term *foundation* for the *covenant* of God; for the Hebrew word signifying foundation, is sometimes taken for a covenant or agreement. But we have said enough on the subject. We believe, then, that it is impossible for an elect person to perish: not that he could not perish, if left to himself; but because the arm of the Almighty always upholds him. He does indeed permit his people to fall into grievous sins, by which they deserve to be entirely forsaken by him; yet he suffers them not to die in those sins, but recovers them in a wonderful manner.

CHAPTER III.

OF THE ASSURANCE OF ELECTION.

Not only is the election of believers certain and unchangeable, but they can also certainly know that they are elected; not by ascending into heaven to read the book of life, but by descending, as it were, into their own

hearts, examining the book of conscience, and discovering in themselves the fruits of election. For if believers can know that they have faith, they can be sure of their election, because faith is the effect of election; now they can know that they possess faith, as is proved by that passage of Paul, in which he enjoins believers to "examine themselves, whether they be in the faith," (2 Cor. xiii. 5,) for to no purpose would the apostle enjoin this, if it were impossible to ascertain it. Again, the faithful can know certainly whether they are the children of God, for "the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits, that we are the children of God," (Rom. viii. 16.) Now all the children of God are elected; and therefore if the faithful can believe the testimony of the Spirit, they must believe that they are the children of God; and if so, they can believe, or be sure, that they are elected of God. We are also said to be "sealed by the Holy Spirit unto the day of redemption," (Eph. iv. 30,) which could not take place without our being sensible of it; hence John says, "hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit." (1 John iv. 13.) How, then, is it possible, that we should know ourselves to possess the Spirit, and yet be ignorant of our election, since the Holy Spirit is given only to the elect? Finally, the examples of the saints establish this truth, who, being sure of their election and salvation, boldly and confidently professed that no created thing, not even death itself, could separate them from the love of God. See Rom. viii. 38, 39.

But various observations are necessary to be made on this subject, in the way of caution and explanation. *First*, the believer is not always certain of his election, nor equally so at all times, for this assurance is often weakened by afflictions and violent temptations; hence the complaints of the godly, as if God had altogether forsaken them, and "the right hand of the Most High" had been changed. *Secondly*, there are many in the church that without warrant, boast of this assurance, and abuse the profession of it greatly; hence we often find it better to hear the lamentations of a mourning believer, than the exultations of one who rejoices, not through faith, but self-opinion; and it often happens that those who groan, and with the publican, dare not lift up their eyes to heaven, yet possess the very thing which they fear they have not; while others, by the just judgment of God, perceive themselves deprived of what they vainly

and presumptuously imagined they possessed. *Thirdly*, there is no true believer that is not at some time or other certain of his election and salvation, for although the experience of present and the hope of future grace, may for a while be laid asleep in the children of God, yet out of this dark condition the believing soul comes forth, when God restores to it the joy of his salvation; therefore, if sometimes the soul groans, struggles, doubts, and fears, yet afterwards it sings, trusts, rejoices, and triumphs, as over a conquered enemy; as is seen in the cases of David, Asaph, Paul, and others. At any rate we believe that there are very few real believers who die in a state of doubt as to their salvation. *Fourthly*, this assurance cannot come into genuine operation, without following after holiness; for a man who should persist in sin, and yet persuade himself that he is elected to eternal life, and therefore will be certainly saved, would indeed bolster himself up with a false and deceitful hope; on the contrary, such a man, indulging his carnal lusts, and rushing headlong into sin, ought to be persuaded that he is in a state of condemnation, and that eternal destruction hangs over him, except he immediately repent and amend his ways. *Fifthly*, be it observed, that this assurance is by no means incompatible with that "fear and trembling," with which we are enjoined to "work out our salvation," (Phil. ii. 12.) For this fear is not *servile*, partaking of mistrust, and despair, but a *filial* fear, partaking of humility, reverence, and godly solicitude. There are two diseases of the mind, which usually corrupt faith, *carnal security* and *pride of heart;* for both these evils, the remedy is fear; the remedy for pride is a humble and reverential fear; the remedy for security is an anxious and solicitous fear, engaging us in the use of means. From the former the believer learns to think meanly of himself, and highly of God; from the latter he learns that he must not be inactive in the way of salvation. *Lastly*, this doctrine of the assurance of election must be cautiously and prudently set forth, for the comfort of afflicted consciences, not for the encouragement of the ungodly; nor should it ever be enforced, without at the same time enjoining the pursuit of repentance and sanctification. Should any one ask how he may arrive at this assurance, let him take this answer—God hath given him two books, by which he may attain this knowledge—the book of *scripture* and the book of *conscience*. In the former are

laid down the marks and signs of election in the latter he can read and discover, whether he have these marks and signs in himself. Now these are true faith; hatred of sin; sincere pursuit after holiness; unfeigned love to God; even in the midst of afflictions, love to our neighbours, even our enemies;—a heart despising the world, and breathing after heaven.

CHAPTER IV.

OF REPROBATION.*

We have said that some are elected and destined to salvation; God therefore does not have mercy upon all. Now those on whom he does not have mercy, are said to be *reprobated, or rejected.* That some men are thus reprobated, the scripture teaches; for Paul speaks of "the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction," (Rom. ix. 22,) and Jude, verse 4, speaks of "ungodly men, before of old ordained to this condemnation." In reprobation, God must be regarded in two characters, as a Sovereign

* Parts of this chapter have been omitted, as being too artificial in statement to be scriptural. The reader will bear in mind that the divines of that school to which our author belonged, and of which he may be regarded as the last, or as one of the last, always considered *election* as including *reprobation*, properly so called; and therefore, in their systems or common places of divinity, they never omitted to treat upon this awful subject. Most of the modern divines and writers, if not all, who maintain the Calvinistic system, as it is called, reject the term reprobation, and do not admit the existence of any *positive decree* on the part of God, concerning the condemnation of men. Indeed the first English reformers though they undoubtedly maintained the essentials of the Genevese theology, appear to have had very sober, moderate, and judicious views on this peculiar and mysterious doctrine: we might rather say, they did not presume to form any definite opinions upon it at all, as being far beyond the comprehension and the province of finite creatures. Therefore, in the seventeenth article of the Creed which they have given to their descendants and followers, while they broadly and scripturally maintain the doctrine of election, they are wisely and modestly silent on reprobation, at the same time plainly and profitably teaching us the great abuse, which curious (speculating) and carnal persons, may make of an abstract and unscriptural view of the entire doctrine of predestination.

Lord, who doeth what he will with his own, and who may be compared to a potter making out of the same lump one vessel to honour and another to dishonour; and also as a Sovereign Judge, who has power to inflict the punishment that is due. Where, for instance, he passes by Judas and chooses James, he acts as Supreme Lord; but when he condemns Judas to eternal misery, who fell into every sin, and is passed by in his corruption, he acts as Supreme Judge. Sin, therefore, is the cause, on account of which God hath passed by some men; for had there been no sin, no man would have been forsaken; yet if it be asked, why one man is passed by, and not the other, it cannot then be said that sin is the cause of this difference, since both are equally sinners, and therefore equally deserving of rejection, but it must be referred to the sovereign pleasure of God. But if it be inquired, why God condemns Anthony, who is guilty of the greatest sins, and is impenitent, the reason is obvious, viz., his very great sins, which God, as a just Judge, punishes, and must necessarily punish. We must not, therefore, judge of reprobation, as of election; election presupposes nothing in man but misery, and is an act of *mercy*; reprobation is an act of *justice*, which necessarily presupposes sin.

Men have no cause to complain of God, much less blasphemously to accuse him of injustice and cruelty: they cannot complain of his not having mercy upon all, and of his leaving some in their corruption, while he pities others, and brings them out of the abyss of sin. For he is an independent Being, who owes nothing to his creatures, much less to his sinful creatures. No one, therefore, has any just reason to cavil and murmur. "Who art thou, O man, that repliest against God?" (Rom. ix. 20.) Very just therefore are the observations of Prosper on this subject: *When any are lost, we do not hesitate to say that they perish by their own deserts, although God could have mercifully saved them, had it pleased him; and when any are saved, we dare not affirm that they deserved to be saved, since God could have justly condemned them, had it pleased him. But why he does not save all, or why he saves some rather than others, it is not necessary to inquire; since, leaving out the reasons of that difference, it is enough to know, that neither mercy supersedes justice, nor justice mercy, before*

*that Being, by whom no one is condemned except through justice, no one is saved except through mercy.**

CHAPTER V.

OF THE ELECTION AND REPROBATION OF ANGELS.

THE election of angels is not expressly taught in scripture, unless we consider that a reference to it is made in 1 Tim. v. 21, where some angels are called "elect," not so much on account of their excellent nature, as because they are chosen by God from among the rest. But the reprobation of evil angels is gathered from those passages, in which we read that "everlasting fire is prepared for them," as in Matt. xxv. 41. Nor can we doubt that by the just judgment of God they are reprobated from eternity, since, as a punishment for their sin, God has decreed their perdition in hell; for reprobation is

* A single observation may be added: The fact, that some of the human race are saved and some not saved, will be disputed by no one. That the difference does not arise from any innate virtue, or goodness, or willingness to accept the grace offered, is equally clear; since every child of Adam, in his natural state, is alike an enemy to God, and will ever continue so, till God himself puts "a new spirit within him." And that this new spirit is not bestowed on the ground of any foreseen faith or holiness, is apparent from the fact, that many of the vilest of the human race have received this gift, while many virtuous, and moral, and excellent, comparatively speaking, have been passed by. Now a glimpse, perhaps, of the ground of this exercise of Sovereignty in man's salvation, may be obtained from the reflection, That if, after the just denunciation of death to the sinner, the whole sinful race had afterwards been pardoned and restored to life, the divine Justice and Truth would have seemed to suffer eclipse: while, had the whole race been left in a state of death, that glorious display of divine Mercy which has been given in the gospel would have been wanting. The race, therefore, as a whole, is made to exhibit a display of the attributes of Justice and Truth; and at the same time, by means of the wondrous redemption wrought out by Christ Jesus, the attributes of Grace and Mercy are resplendently brought into exercise. And thus the Divine Glory, the great end of all things, is set forth and made to shine out, before all created intelligences, in a manner and degree which infinite Wisdom alone could have brought to pass.

nothing else than the free, righteous, and eternal decree of God to leave a fallen creature in its fall, to reject it for ever, and to punish it according to its deserts. Upon this subject it is far better to be silent, than to speak much, lest we be in danger of "intruding into those things which we have not seen." A few observations however may not be unnecessary.

And, *first*, we observe, that God did not consider the angels in the same state as he considered fallen men; but the elect angels were regarded as *standing*, the reprobate as *fallen*. Again, there are two acts in the election of good angels, namely, the decree confirming them in holiness, and the destination of them to eternal life and happiness. With regard to the first, the good angels, before they were confirmed, stood by that strength which they had all received at their first creation; but after the fall of the evil angels, they were, as a reward for their fidelity, so confirmed and established, that they were delivered from all liability to fall away. I am aware that some divines do not admit the propriety of saying that the good angels were *confirmed* by God, because the scripture is silent about it; they maintain that they were confirmed by the example of others, which greatly influenced them, and also by their own experience, since a succession of good actions adds very greatly to the confirmation of the doer; but I cannot accede to this opinion; for if the angels had not been confirmed by God himself, they would still be in a natural, and consequently in a changeable, condition; since whatever is natural, is changeable. Now it cannot be a correct sentiment, that angels are changeable. We said also that these angels were predestinated to life and happiness; for there is no reason why we should not view the predestination of angels in the same light as that of men, although it is rash to speak positively on such a subject.

But these angels, it must be observed, cannot be said to have been *elected* or *confirmed* by Christ the Mediator, because where there is no sin, there is no room for mediation. Every mediator presupposes parties at variance, but there was no variance between God and angels. Christ is never called the mediator of angels, but only of men, although he can be properly called the head of angels, who are subject to the Mediator, as their Lord and King. It is true "all things" are said to be "reconciled to God by Christ, peace having been made by his blood," (Col. i. 20,) but only all things which need-

ed reconciliation, and which were separated from God by sin; which cannot be said of angels. Even if this passage should be understood of angels, as well as of others, the apostle will only mean that Christ, having made peace, reconciled angels with men, just the same as, when a rebellion is quelled, the good citizens and the rebels are reconciled, and live quietly together under the same sovereign.

As to the reprobation of the evil angels, that also comprises two acts. The *first*, by which God decreed to leave them in their fall and so to abandon them, that they should be excluded not only from all hope of pardon and salvation, but also from all participation of grace of any kind. And here observe, that God has dealt more severely with angels than with men; for some of the latter he has been pleased to raise from their fall, but he has not thought fit to spare any of the former: ask not the reason; it is secret, but not unjust. Observe also, that God hath dealt more severely with the evil angels than with reprobate men, who, though excluded from salvation, are not deprived of all temporal favours from God. The *second* act is that, whereby God hath decreed to punish them with everlasting destruction in hell. They began to be punished immediately after their sin, being cast down from heaven, which perhaps the heathen slightly knew, since they represented Ate, the goddess of calamity or evil, seized by the hair, and hurled down by Jupiter from heaven to earth, and forbidden to re-enter the skies. Another degree of their punishment was at the time of Christ's coming, for then Christ "destroyed him that had the power of death, that is the devil," (Heb. ii. 14,) "the prince of this world was then judged." (John xvi. 11.) A *third* degree was by the preaching of the apostles, "I beheld," says Christ, "Satan as lightning fall from heaven." (Luke x. 18.) The last degree of their punishment will be, when they shall be cast into the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone. (Rev. xx, 10, 14.)

CHAPTER VI.

OF THE RIGHT USE OF THE ABOVE DOCTRINES

HAVING explained the doctrines of election and reprobation, we may make a few remarks on the proper use of these doctrines. There are two classes of men who abuse these doctrines; there are those who draw from thence an occasion of despair, while they say, "If I am not elected, whatever I do, it will matter nothing; eternal destruction awaits me." There are others, who think that they have from these doctrines the free liberty to sin, saying, "that whatever life they lead, good or bad, their condition cannot be made worse, if they are destined to salvation." Hence it is that the doctrine is traduced on two grounds, as though it diverted men from the pursuit of holiness, and also thrust them into the depths of despair.

Now against the first class of these persons we observe, that without any foundation they take from this doctrine occasion to despair; *we should not despair of the salvation of any one, whom the forbearance of God suffers to live, and least of all of one's self*, as Augustine observes. For although no one can be sure of his election, till he be conscious of faith and sanctification, yet there are many things which teach man not to despair of his election, since God daily calls him in the Gospel, and knocks at the door of his heart by his Spirit; which things, although not sufficient to prove his election, yet are sufficient to prove to any man, that he has no ground for regarding himself, or his neighbour, as reprobate, which no one can be accounted till the day of his death. Again, it is very groundless for a man to say, "If I am reprobated, I shall perish, though I believe, and apply myself to holiness;" for there is no such a decree as one which condemns men *notwithstanding* their faith and holy living; on the contrary, it is the proclamation of the gospel, that "whosoever believeth, shall have eternal life." Further, so far is the doctrine of predestination from driving men to despair, that on the contrary it is full of sweetness and comfort, in the temptations which arise from the corruptions of seducers, the scan-

dals of apostates, and the rage of persecutors, or from the infirmities of the flesh and sin, and also in afflictions arising either from the oppression of the enemies of the church, or from the privation and want of the necessaries of life.

Against the other class of persons, who abuse this doctrine to licentiousness and sloth, and say, that, "if they are elected, they shall be saved, do whatever they please," we observe in the first place, that this idea of giving loose to sinful lusts on account of predestination, can only come from a profane and wicked person; an elect child of God can never prevail upon himself wilfully to sin against God, from the persuasion of his being beloved by God; or choose, because he is predestinated to a heavenly, therefore to live an earthly and carnal life. Again, it is false that an elect person will be saved whatever he may do. For the same God who has destined him to salvation, hath destined him also to the means which lead to salvation. Paul was a vessel of mercy, separated from eternity, and therefore was destined to certain salvation; yet if any one should say, that Paul would have been equally saved, whether he had been converted to Christ, or whether he had persisted to the last in his blasphemy and in his persecution of the church, he would say what was positively false. Therefore, although it is true that every elect person will be saved, yet it is false that he will be saved in the ways of sin. For it is as necessary that an elect person should be saved in the prescribed way, as it is that he should be saved at all; it is therefore absurd to say, that an elect person will be saved, although he should be unholy, because he is not only elected to salvation, but also to holiness. Once more, a man will not be saved merely because he was elected, but because he has believed in Christ, and has endeavoured, as well as his infirmiiy would admit, to frame his life in a holy manner, and to fulfil the conditions of the new covenant. So far, then, is the doctrine of predestination from encouraging men to sin, that it furnishes a variety of cogent motives to the practice of holiness. It kindles in us love towards God, it urges us to purity, it makes us humble, produces firm trust in God, and also watchfulness and diligence in duty, as might be proved at large, did our limits permit.

CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY.

BOOK THE SIXTH.

REDEMPTION BY CHRIST THE MEDIATOR.

CHAPTER I

OF THE NECESSITY OF SATISFACTION FOR SIN.

In the preceding book we have seen how God took pity on the human race, having appointed some men to salvation, and passed by others; and at the same time we remarked that God hath decreed also the *means* of salvation. Now the first of these means was the *sending of Christ*, to assume the human nature, to become the *Mediator* between God and man, and to make satisfaction to God for sin; we have therefore now to consider in what way God executed this decree of saving men. Now in order to see how necessary it was, that Christ should come into the world to procure for us that salvation which had been destined by the Father, three points must be established—1. That a satisfaction to divine justice was necessary to human salvation. 2. That it was not, however, necessary that the offenders themselves should make this satisfaction. 3. That it was necessary that this should be done by some divine person.

But first, we must speak a little of the term *satisfaction*. It was in frequent use among the Latins. When they wished to express how one man complied with the wishes of another, they said that the former *satisfied* the other. He is also said to *satisfy*, who either by word or deed expressed his sorrow for having injured another,

and deprecated his displeasure. Again, when a man paid a debt he owed, or when he paid a debt which another owed, or gave an equivalent, he was also said to *satisfy*. Among the Fathers every act of a penitent sinner went by the name of *satisfaction;* and by this term they especially distinguished those public testimonies of repentance, which, for the edification of the faithful, and as a reparation for the scandal given, were accustomed to be exhibited by those who had fallen into any notorious sin. In our present subject we shall take the word *satisfaction* to mean the payment of that which divine justice required from sinners for their transgressions. The Latin word corresponds with the Hebrew words כפר פדה, and the Greek words λυτρον, ἀντιλυτρον, ἀπολύτρωσις, ἱλασμος, &c.

These things being premised, we come to the first question; and here there is no need of many arguments to prove the necessity of satisfaction; one single argument would be enough, drawn from the death of Christ. For if it were in no way necessary to satisfy divine justice for sins, and if God could have saved man without satisfaction, we cannot conceive how the Father should be pleased to give up his beloved and innocent Son to a most painful and ignominious death; no reason can be given for so extraordinary a proceeding, but the satisfaction that was necessary to be made to divine justice. If God could have blotted out all our sins by a single act of his will, why did he without any necessity send down his beloved Son from heaven, clothe him with the form of a servant, and subject him to dreadful sufferings. Could the supreme wisdom and goodness of God have permitted this without necessity? Besides this argument, there is another derived from the avenging justice of God; since if this is essential to the very nature of God, as we proved on a former occasion, it follows that that justice must have been satisfied, to give room for mercy:—for the fixed and unchangeable determination of God to punish sin, must necessarily exact punishment from sinners, unless some one else should make satisfaction for the guilty.

The sanction of the divine law also renders satisfaction necessary. For since God has threatened the sinner with punishment, and since he is true and cannot lie, the threatening of God must necessarily be fulfilled, unless another make satisfaction to the law. Nor can we believe that God could dispense with his right; for

God in this instance is not to be regarded as a *creditor*, who can at his pleasure forgive the debt, or simply as the *offended party*—say some lord or master, who can do what he will with his own, but he must be regarded as the Ruler and Judge of the universe, who cannot let sin go unpunished, without denying himself, and tarnishing the purity of his own laws. It is true, sins are compared to *debts*, because, as a debt gives the creditor a right to proceed against the debtor, so sin gives God a right to proceed against us. But it does not follow from this, that it would have been as easy for God to forgive sins without satisfaction, as it is for a creditor to remit a debt; for while no injury is done to the law by a creditor's remitting a debt, there is great injury done to the divine law, if sin be not punished. And if from sins being called debts we could infer that satisfaction is unnecessary, it might on the same grounds be contended, that God could discharge men from obedience, because obedience is called a *debt* we owe to him; and also that God could pardon sin without any regard to faith and repentance; but these positions no person of judgment ever ventured to maintain. Nor is God in this matter to be compared to earthly princes, who, to the great praise of their clemency, often pardon, not only their own, but also the injuries committed against the state. Indeed they are often compelled to be thus merciful, lest they should be reckoned cruel, and their cruelty should bring them more fear than real power; and also lest their subjects should rebel against them. Besides, they often take upon themselves to do what is contrary to the law, as though they could dispense with the laws at their pleasure; they may indeed pardon those offences which can be pardoned without any injury to the public good, and without infringing on the authority of the law; but all other offences they are bound to punish, since they "bear the sword to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil," Rom. xiii. 4.

It was necessary, therefore, that divine justice should be satisfied for sins. The *second* question is, whether it was necessary that sinners themselves should make this satisfaction? It is replied, that all sinners deserve punishment, and that the punishment of their sins is perfectly agreeable to the nature and fitness of things;—that divine justice could demand that sinners themselves should suffer the punishment due, nor could they have complained, had it been exacted of them;—that justice

however, could dispense with this, and allow of a substitute in the place of the guilty. That all this may be placed in its true light, be it observed, that there is a distinction between not punishing *sin*, and not punishing *the sinner;* it is contrary to the divine justice and holiness, not to punish sin, but it is not contrary to these, to spare the sinner. A just and holy God must hate sin, and must punish it; it is therefore inconsistent with justice and holiness to allow it to go unpunished; but these perfections are not injured, if, when sin is punished, the sinner is pardoned, because it is by the punishment of sin that the justice of God is satisfied.

Now this method of punishing sin and pardoning the sinner is very agreeable to the wisdom of God, for thus room is given for mercy, and yet justice is satisfied; for, if all sinners were to have satisfied divine justice, they would have been subjected to eternal death, and thus no room have been afforded for the display of mercy; whereas by allowing a surety to put himself in the place of sinners, there is room both for justice and for mercy; the former punishes sin, and admits a satisfaction for the sinner; the latter remits the obligation to the sinner on account of the satisfaction offered to justice by the surety; in this way *satisfaction* and *remission* are not at all opposed to each other; for the former is made by the *surety*, the latter is given to the sinner.

It was not then necessary that sinners themselves should make satisfaction: but should it seem contrary to justice that the innocent should be punished for the guilty, we reply, that neither in the word of God, nor in the usages of mankind, is it unprecedented that one man should bear the punishment of another man's offence; and this substitution was plainly set forth in the whole Levitical economy, in which, in the place of the offender, a victim was commonly substituted, to suffer the penalty of death due to him. Hence the practice of the offender laying his hands upon the victim, and especially that observed on the day of atonement, when the high priest, laying both his hands on the head of the goat, "confessed over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel," which that goat was said to *bear*. (Lev. xvi. 21, 22.) Nor is this method repugnant to the principles of justice, if the following conditions be all present, viz. that sin be punished, and that the punishment be proportioned to the sin—that he who suffers the punishment, as a surety, do so freely, of his own accord, without any compulsion

—that he be the author and disposer of his own life, who can do with it as he pleases, without injury to any one —that he be able to offer a sufficient ransom for those whose surety he is, otherwise the substitution would be useless—that he do not utterly perish in his sufferings, but come out of them by his own power, so that no injury be done to the world in depriving it of a holy and excellent person—that he be able to amend and restore the guilty person, that there may not be afforded a liberty to sin, and thus the state be deprived of its good citizens, while the bad are preserved—that the supreme judge consent to this arrangement—and that the innocent surety be of the same nature as the guilty person, so that sin may be punished in the same nature which sinned.

All these conditions then being present, no injury is done to justice, and all these conditions were found in Christ, and therefore he was able to become the surety of the human race. For, as we shall more clearly see hereafter, sin was punished in him, and that with an infinite punishment—he was the disposer of his own life, (John x. 18.) he voluntarily and freely offered himself, (Psalm xl. 8; Heb. x. 9.)—he was able to pay a sufficient ransom, and he paid it—he was able to raise himself from death, and he did so—he had power to convert the sinners for whom he died, and he has done so—the supreme judge of all was well pleased—the surety was most intimately connected with us by the ties of nature, having taken upon him our flesh, and by the ties of law and justice, having been given to us by the Father as our surety, and we having been given to him, and also by that mystical and spiritual tie, which unites us with him in one body, of which he is the head, and we the members. And truly this doctrine sheds light upon the divine perfections. It displays God's *holiness* in admitting no sinner into communion with himself without satisfaction for sin; his *justice*, in exacting the penalty of sin with inexorable rigour; his *wisdom*, in so providing for man's salvation, as to detract nothing from his own glory, and so displaying his mercy, as to derogate nothing from his justice. It displays also the infinite love of God, who, to save us, spared not his only begotten Son, delivering up to death that Son for slaves, the just for the unjust, the innocent for the guilty; as also the infinite love of Christ, who condescended for our sakes to humble himself in the lowest form of a servant; to be

crucified that he might redeem us; to become sin, that he might acquit us from sin; and to endure death, that he might give us life and immortality. This doctrine also promotes godliness, increases the hatred of sin, inspires us with fear, and love towards God.

We proceed to examine the *third* question proposed, viz. whether it was necessary that the surety for sinners should be a divine person? This appears evident from a single argument; sin deserves infinite punishment, seeing it hath offended infinite majesty; if, then, there was required perfect satisfaction, infinite satisfaction was necessary: but he cannot make this, who is not himself infinite; and therefore since no one, either of angels, or of men, is infinite, but God only, no one but God could have made a *sufficient* satisfaction for our redemption. It was therefore required that a divine person should offer himself in the place of sinners: but since all the persons of the Godhead were equally offended, how can it be conceived that one of them should make satisfaction to himself, which appears absurd? We observe, therefore, that this appears absurd, when the question is about private satisfaction for a private injury, but not so, when the question concerns public satisfaction; as if any one should become liable to a fine, the magistrate himself could pay the fine for him to satisfy the law. The story of Zaleucus the lawgiver is well known, who voluntarily suffered one half of the punishment incurred by his own son, and thus, as Valerius neatly expresses it, *by a wonderful admixture of equity, divided himself between the merciful father and the just lawgiver.* The mediation also of Menenius Agrippa between the Roman senate and people is well known. Moreover the judge himself can become guilty of violating the law, and can condemn himself, and thus, as a criminal, he could make satisfaction to himself as a judge. Therefore, in this point of view, there is no obstacle to any one's making satisfaction to himself. It is not, then, strange to say that a divine person could offer satisfaction to himself, and to the divine majesty; because in this matter God is not to be regarded as a private, but as a public person, as the Lord, and Judge, and Ruler of the universe, who is concerned to preserve inviolate the sanctity of his own laws.

We must also remark that to be an *offended party*, and to be a *mediator*, are not incompatible with each other, except where the offended person requires the

total destruction of the offending; but where the offended party only demands that the injury done be repaired, then the offended party can become a mediator, and by repairing the wrong done, procure pardon for the offending. Now this was the thing required by God, that the injury done to the divine majesty should be repaired. It was therefore possible for one of the divine Persons, though offended, to mediate between an offended Deity, and offending creatures. Should the question be asked, whether it was necessary that the *second* Person of the Godhead, should make satisfaction, we reply, that we are entirely ignorant whether any other of the persons could have done it, or not: but we fully know that it was very suitable for the Son to be sent by the Father, and for the Spirit to apply the redemption purchased by the Son.

CHAPTER II.

OF THE LAW.

Though satisfaction for sin was necessary, yet it was not necessary that it should be made, and that God should send his Son for this purpose, immediately after the fall; on the contrary God was pleased in his wisdom to delay the incarnation of his Son for several ages, in order that men might be prepared for his coming by a long series of prophets; and that, being convinced of the greatness of their sin, the impotency of their nature, and the insufficiency of all human means, they might acknowledge the necessity of the remedy, and call out, as it were, for the physician. But although the Mediator did not appear immediately after the fall, yet was he promised soon after the first transgression; and was more clearly promised, as the time of his appearance drew near. It was foretold that the Mediator should be a man, the seed of the woman—that he should descend from Abraham—that he should spring from the seed of Jacob, even from Judah—that he should be of the family of David—that he should be born of a virgin, and that

too at Bethlehem—that he should suffer and die—together with the particular time of his coming; (Gen. iii. 15; xxii. 18; xxix. 10; Isaiah xi. 1; Jer. xxiii. 5; Isaiah vii. 14; Micah v. 2; Isaiah liii.; Daniel ix. 23—26,) not to mention other plain and well known prophecies concerning Christ's miracles, his death on the cross, the vinegar and the gall which were offered him on the cross, the thirty pieces of silver for which he was sold, or the division of his garments, and his resurrection from the dead.

Now before God sent his Son, he was pleased to give his law to mankind. It is true, that from the time when he created man, he had engraven the natural law upon his heart. To which law Cicero alluded, when he described it as *not written, but born within us, not learned, nor heard, nor read, but received and drawn from nature;* and the emperor Marcus Antoninus called it *the divinity which resides within the breast.* Now this law of nature God was pleased to promulgate again, partly, that it might receive a stronger sanction, and that the ideas of good that remained might not be lost through the vanity and wickedness of mankind; partly, that man's duty might be more clearly revealed to him; partly, to correct those notions which sin had corrupted; and partly, to revive those which had been obliterated.

God himself was pleased to promulgate this law, and that this was done by no other than the second Person of the Trinity, Stephen seems to intimate, when he declares that Moses received the "lively oracles" from the "Angel," i. e. the angel of the covenant. (Acts vii. 38.) For it was the same angel who, he said, appeared to Moses in the bush, (verse 35,) and who declared himself to be the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Angels were the attendants on this occasion, (Acts vii. 53; Gal. iii. 19,) hosts of whom surrounded the great Leader and Captain, when he manifested his presence by fire, smoke, thunder, lightning and tempest. So God ordered it, to increase the dignity, and testify the sanctity of this law, and to teach mankind, that it was "the ministration of death." The place was Mount Sinai, or Horeb, in Arabia. The time was the fiftieth day from the departure out of Egypt, and the celebration of the passover, and Moses was the person who gave to the Israelites the tables of the covenant he had received from God by the ministration of angels, and discharged the office of mediator for them when terrified by the voice of God.

"The law was given by Moses." (John i. 17.) The celebrated Huetius observes, that the Brahmins preserve a tradition of the book of their law having been delivered by God from a cloud upon a mountain, and of God having given another law in the first age of the world. The same writer also remarks that the Brahmins have their decalogue, very like that of Moses, and very accurate interpretations of it, among which they assert that there is a prophecy of a future period, in which one law shall be established through the whole world.

The law was not only declared by word of mouth, but also *written*. God was pleased to write it, that it might not be forgotten. Most divines observe that it was *written* by God, in order to show the superiority of the divine law to other laws, and to intimate that it is the work of God, not of man, to write the law upon our minds. They observe, also, that it was *engraven*, to denote its perpetual obligation on mankind, and that, too, upon *stone*, to shew us that the foundations of the law should always remain unshaken, and also that the heart of man is by nature "a heart of stone;" finally, that it was written on *both sides*, to shew that nothing was to be taken from it, and nothing added to it. Now there were three kinds of laws given through Moses—the *moral* law, which lays down man's duty towards God and his neighbour—the *ceremonial*, which lays down the rites or ceremonies of the religion observed under the Old Testament—the *judicial*, which established the civil government of the Jewish people. The *moral* law had respect to the Israelites as men; the *ceremonial* respected them, as under the Old Testament, waiting for the promised Messiah; the *judicial*, as a peculiar people.

There is a very great difference between these three laws. The moral law is founded, at least in a very great measure, on the *natural* right of God; by which we mean that which rests upon the most pure and holy nature of God himself; for instance, this precept, which is the sum of the law,—*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God*, is founded on the very nature of God; otherwise God could command himself, who is the supreme good, to be hated. Whereas other laws are founded on the *positive* right of God, by which we mean that which depends on the mere will and pleasure of God. This law is known from nature; hence the Gentiles themselves were not ignorant of it, although it was far more clearly

known when divinely revealed. The *ceremonial* law does not come under the natural understanding of man, and as to the *judicial* law, although in its general precepts it is founded on natural reason, yet with regard to its particular conclusions it depends entirely on the will of God. The moral law is immutable and eternal, although all its precepts are not of the same kind. For some are founded on the very nature and holiness of God, the contrary to which he could not therefore enjoin without denying himself. Thus God could not command us to have any other God than himself, to worship idols,—to profane his name, to lie, &c. Others are founded on the very nature of things, yet according to the constitution or order established by God, which he has power to change in certain cases, but which man has no power to change; thus the *slaying of a man*, and *the taking of that which is another's*, might become lawful by the authority of a divine injunction. The case is the same with the obedience due to parents: for God commands, that, if parents require any thing contrary to his law, obedience shall not be paid to them. As to the particular appointment of the Sabbath, contained in the fourth commandment, it will be acknowledged to be of *positive* right or institution. The *ceremonial* and *judicial* laws are of a changeable and temporal nature. The moral law is called the *decalogue*, because it is comprised in ten commandments. The *ceremonial* law is called by the apostle, "the law of commandments contained in ordinances." (Eph. ii. 15; Col. ii. 14.) The *judicial* law is simply expressed by the word *judgments*.

Concerning the moral law we shall speak when we treat of sanctification and good works, here only observing that we may define it to be *a rule of conduct, sanctioned by reward or punishment*. But that we may say something of the ceremonial and judicial laws, we remark that the former was given, both to distinguish the Israelites from other nations, whence it is called "the middle wall of partition," (Eph. ii. 14,) and to shadow out things to come, especially Christ, as also to restrain the posterity of the Israelites, and prevent them from falling away to the superstitions of the heathen. We remark also, that it generally related to sacred things and persons. Now sacred *things* are those which are exempted from common, and destined to sacred, uses, and they were either *gifts* or *sacrifices*. Gifts were oblations of things, inanimate productions of the earth,

ministering to the nourishment, luxury, or health of man, such as *bread, wine, oil, salt, frankincense,* and also *money,* which was paid by male persons above twenty years of age for their redemption; which was not however a perpetual payment, but only temporary, for the erection of the tabernacle. The *sacrifices* were oblations of living creatures, and were of two kinds, *propitiatory* or *sin-offerings,* by which offences, whether committed ignorantly or wilfully, were expiated; and *thank* or *peace-offerings,* presented for blessings received or expected, and divided into *gratulatory, votive,* and *voluntary.*

Some persons make eight kinds of these sacrifices, *Burnt-offerings,* which were entirely consumed by fire. (Lev. i. 10; vi. 9; xii. 6, 8.) *Meat-offerings,* consisting of fine flour, on which oil was poured, and frankincense put. (Lev. ii. 1—3.) It was unlawful to mix honey or leaven with these, but they were to be salted. *Peace-offerings,* (Lev. iii. 1; vii. 11,) divided into three parts, of which the first belonged to God, the second to the priests, the third to the offerers, who were to eat it in the court of the temple. *Sin-offerings,* (Lev. iv. 3,) most of which were offered for ceremonial uncleanness, or some lighter offences, or even for greater, provided they were not committed in pride and malice. *Trespass-offerings,* (Lev. v. 1,) for certain offences; those who offered these, laid their hands on the victim, and confessed their sin before the Lord at the door of the temple; and if they had injured their neighbour, they were to make satisfaction: the poorer sort offering two turtle doves, or two young pigeons. (Lev. v. 7.) The very poor offered a tenth of fine flour without oil and frankincense. The *sacrifice* offered at the consecration of a priest on the day of his appointment. (Lev. vi. 7, 10.) The *sacrifice of cleansing,* for those who were to be purged from various kinds of uncleanness. The *incense* burning on the *golden altar.* (Exod. xxx. 7.)

We must consider, also, the *place* and *time* of these sacred things. The *place,* by God's appointment, was, first, the *tabernacle,* in which God commanded himself to be worshipped, and manifested his presence by visible signs, and in which were the ark of the covenant, the altar of burnt-offering and incense, the table with the shew-bread, and other instruments of ceremonial worship; and after the tabernacle, the *temple of Solomon.* The *sacred times* were distinguished by the *morning and*

evening sacrifice, regularly offered every day; by the *Sabbath*, a festival of the seventh-day; the *new moons*, which were celebrated at the commencement of each month; the *yearly* feasts, such as the feast of the *Passover*, in memory of the deliverance from Egyptian bondage; the feast of *Pentecost*, in remembrance of the giving of the law, which was also called the *feast of weeks*, (Exod. xxxiv. 22,) because seven weeks were to be reckoned from the passover; and also the *feast of harvest*, because about that time the harvest commenced in the land of Canaan. (Exod. xxiii. 16.) To these must be added the *feast of tabernacles*, in remembrance of the Israelites dwelling in tents in the wilderness; the *feast of trumpets*, which did not differ from the *new moons*, except in its greater solemnity, on account of the beginning of the new year, which was celebrated on the first day of the seventh month, when the political year of the Jews commences; the *feast of atonement*, on the tenth day of the seventh month, on which the High-priest entered into the Holy of Holies; and lastly, the *feast of collection*. Of the three last-mentioned feasts, the first commemorated the beginning of the civil year; the second, the pardon of the sin of idolatry in respect to the golden calf; and the third was intended for the payment of the various tributes for the maintenance of divine service. There were other festivals, which occurred after a certain period of years, such as the *Sabbatical* year, which came round every seventh year, in which there was a release from the labour of tillage; and the Jubilee, every fiftieth year, in which slaves were set at liberty, debts were forgiven, and things that were sold returned into the hands of their former owners. Besides these festivals of divine appointment, others were afterwards added, as certain days of *fasting* in remembrance of the Babylonish captivity, (Zech. vii. 3, 5; viii. 19;) the feast of *Purim*, or of lots, (Esther ix.;) and the feast of the *dedication*, in remembrance of the purifying of the temple under Judas Maccabeus. (1 Macc. iv. 59; John x. 22.)

Sacred persons were those who were called and consecrated in a particular form to any sacred office; these were *extraordinary*, as the *prophets*, divinely raised up either to establish, or to restore the church, and to foretel future events; and stirred up to prophecy by visions, dreams, or the internal influence of the Holy Spirit; and *ordinary*, as the *priests*, one of whom was the high-

priest, whose consecration, dress, and office was more remarkable than those of the rest, and who once only every year entered into the sanctuary, to expiate the sins of himself, his family, and the whole people. The other priests were of inferior rank, who offered the sacrifices, trimmed and lighted the lamps, cleaned the altar, swept the ashes, kept away the profane and unclean from the threshold of the temple, changed the sacred bread every Sabbath, burned the incense, and pronounced the blessing on the people. These, together with the high-priest, descended in unbroken succession from the family of Aaron, through his sons Eleazar and Ithamar; they were divided into twenty-four classes, each of which officiated by turns for a week. Next came the Levites, who were of the same tribe, and "taken instead of the first-born;" these attended on the priests, and assisted them in the cleaning of the sacred vessels, the slaying of victims, and the placing of the shew-bread. There were three families of them; the Kohathites, who had the charge of the ark and all the sacred vessels; the Gershonites, who had the charge of the curtains and hangings of the tabernacle; the Merarites, who had the charge of the pillars and boards, and sockets, and all other instruments of it. (Numb. iv. 15, 24, 25, 31, 32.) The Levites were consecrated to God from the first month after their birth. (Numb. iii. 15, 40.) When they had reached their twenty-fifth year, they were initiated into their office by the imposition of hands; and when they were fifty years old, they were discharged, namely, they were exempted from the more burdensome part of the tabernacle service. Among the sacred persons we may also reckon the *Nazarites*, some of whom became so by *vow*, others were *born* so, or divinely appointed. These abstained from all strong drink, wore their hair unshorn, and observed a peculiar sanctity of behaviour. (Numb. vi. 5.)

With regard to the *political* or *judicial* law of the Jews, it was instituted for the purpose of governing God's people; distinguishing them from all others; delivering the moral and ceremonial law from being despised; and shadowing forth the spiritual kingdom of Christ. This law also had reference to *persons* and *things*. There were two sorts of persons, *governors* and the *governed*. Of the governors some were *temporary*, others *perpetual;* of the former, were the *Judges*, who ended in Samuel; and the *Kings* of David's line, who

ended in Zedekiah; of the latter, who continued as long as the Jewish polity continued, some were superior, as the *elders* or members of the *Sanhedrim;* others inferior, as the *heads* of *tribes, families, states,* of which last there were several subdivisions. The authority exercised was of two kinds, *supreme* and *subordinate.* The former belonged to the Sanhedrim, who held their sittings in the capital of the kingdom. This assembly was convened, either by the king, or by the leader of the people, or by the high-priest, and it sat in judgment upon the crime of false prophecy, and of treason; upon the offence of a whole tribe, or of the high-priest. The latter kind of authority was exercised by the *Triumviri*, who took cognizance of money causes, and private injuries, and by the *twenty-three*, who sat in judgment upon capital causes.

The sentences passed were capital, as *stoning, burning, strangling, beheading.* In this way were punished incestuous persons, sodomites, the daughter of a priest when guilty of fornication, blasphemers, idolaters, adulterers, and murderers. The punishments which were not capital, were the cutting off a limb, a fourfold restitution, slavery, and banishment. The witnesses were accustomed to lay the first hand upon the condemned; and in scourging, the number of stripes was not allowed to exceed forty.

The *things* about which the judicial law was concerned, were either *ecclesiastical*, such as related to religion itself, or to ecclesiastical property; *domestic*, such as belonged to marriages, inheritances, usuries; or *political*, which concerned either peace or war. As to the oral law of the Jews, it is a mere fiction, which even some of them ridicule, and therefore we need not say any thing concerning it in these pages.

CHAPTER III.

OF THE PREPARATORY NATURE OF THE LAW.

If it be inquired, why God was pleased to give his law to mankind before the incarnation of Christ, we reply, it

was for the purpose of preparing them for the coming of his Son, and of showing them the necessity of his coming. That it was not given to deliver men from the guilt and bondage of sin, will appear by considering that rites and ceremonies could have no power to expiate sin; being merely external and carnal, and bearing no proportion to the sins committed, nor to an offended God, or offending man; so that, as Paul observes, "it was not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sin," (Heb. x. 4.) The moral law also contained no promise of remission of sins; on the contrary, it denounced a curse on its transgressors, nor did it furnish any power to counteract the dominion of sin, but rather irritated than restrained the lusts of man. The law, therefore, was given to prepare men for Christ's coming. Now in order that mankind might be thus prepared, and might eagerly look forward to this great event, it was necessary for them to be acquainted with the following things—the supreme majesty and holiness of God—the duties which they owed towards such a Being—the severe punishment threatened against the transgressors of his laws—the greatness of those sins they had committed, and which exposed them to eternal punishment—and their own utter inability to perform their duty, and to appease divine wrath for their sins. Now all these things the law taught them; it was a glass in which man beheld the holiness and justice of his Maker and Judge, his own sinfulness and helplessness, with the curse thence following. The thunder, the lightning, the fire, the sound of the trumpet, the whole of the awful circumstances which attended the promulgation of the law, proclaimed the majesty of the lawgiver. The precepts contained in the law showed man his duty—*Do this and live;* and he could easily judge what he had to expect from God by the curse appended to them—"Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things," &c. All this was calculated to humble the pride of man, to make him despair of saving himself, and to compel him to look out for a remedy of his evil condition. Now this remedy is Christ; and thus, by the appointment of God, the "law was man's schoolmaster to bring him to Christ."

The legal *ceremonies* also prepared men for Christ, inasmuch as they were types and shadows of Christ, his offices, and benefits. The high priest, all the other priests, the Nazarites, the sacrifices, the ark, the taber-

nacle, were all types of Christ our Saviour. Our narrow limits will not allow us to prove this at large; but a simple examination of these ceremonies will show us, that they were designed by God, not to tie down the worshippers to earthly and carnal observances, but to raise their minds to heavenly and spiritual things. *For what*, says Calvin, *in itself can be more frivolous and useless than for men to offer unto God the disagreeable savour arising from the fat of slain beasts, in order to reconcile themselves to him; or, in order to wash away the filth of sin, to have recourse to the sprinkling of water or blood?* It was therefore the design of God, in instituting these rites, to raise the minds of the Israelites to higher objects; for we cannot suppose that the spiritual nature of Jehovah was delighted with these earthly things: he testifies the contrary by the mouth of the prophets, who so often reprove the Jews for imagining that any sacrifices could be of use or benefit to God, (Psalm xl. 7. l. 8.) But God was pleased to wrap up his own mysteries in these shadows, because such a system was very well suited to the *infancy* of the church; which, being not yet capable of greater light, derived instruction from these shadows, having but a small measure of the Holy Spirit; nor did it less suit the nature of the Israelites, who, being a stiff-necked people, and very prone to fall into the idolatrous practices of the heathen, needed such restraints as these to preserve them. The legal ceremonies also prepared men for Christ, inasmuch as they were so many confessions of human sin and misery, and of guilt contracted by sin, (Col. ii. 14. Heb. x. 1—3.) For what else did they by these sacrifices, but to confess themselves guilty and deserving of death, and therefore to substitute victims in their own place? The knife of the sacrificing priest among the Egyptians had engraven upon it the figure of a man lying upon an altar, denoting that beasts were put in the place of man, who was the real offender. What else also did they testify by their various washings, but their own uncleanness? Thus they continually renewed "the handwriting" of their guilt and impurity, and therefore were led ardently to desire some one who might "blot out that handwriting:" this was Christ, who alone "blotted it out, and nailed it to his cross." Once more, these ceremonies prepared for Christ, inasmuch as they formed an "intolerable yoke" under which the Jews groaned, and from which they desired deliverance.

CHAPTER IV.

OF THE DIFFERENT STATES OF THE CHURCH BEFORE CHRIST'S COMING.

There were various conditions of the Church of God before the coming of Christ. The *first* state was that under the early patriarchs, who may be reckoned ten in number, among whom we must particularly distinguish Adam, Seth, Enoch, to whose times is usually referred the origin of public worship, (Gen. iv. 26,) and Noah. Enoch, distinguished for the sanctity of his life and for the spirit of prophecy, was miraculously translated to heaven, and Noah was celebrated both for his preaching repentance, and for his building the ark, as also for his wonderful preservation in the deluge, his restoration of divine worship, and foundation of the new world. This may be regarded as the infancy of the church, and at this period men began to be corrupted with idolatrous practices, as Josephus and many other learned men maintain. *Secondly*, it was preserved in the family of Shem, the son of Noah, and other patriarchs, down to Abraham, as we may suppose, in the family of Heber, from whom very probably was derived the name of the nation and its language, and also of Serug, the seventh from Shem, to whose times some refer the worship of images and idols among the Babylonians.

Thirdly, it was preserved and increased in the families of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the three distinguished patriarchs: and yet we need not believe that the house of Abraham was the only one in which the Church existed, for without it there were men remarkable for piety towards the true God, which circumstance was a prelude to the calling of the Gentiles. Among these pious characters was Melchizedek, concerning whom various questions are raised, as, whether he was a creature, or the very Son of God himself; whether he was the same as Shem, or Peleg, or some other prince; whether the Salem of which he was king, was Jerusalem, or some other Salem; how he was the priest of the most high

God among the wicked Canaanites; and in what respects he was a type of Christ. Another of these holy men was Job, an illustrious example of piety, faith, patience, constancy, and fervent prayer; concerning whose person, age, family, country, rank, &c. that great writer Spanheim may be consulted. Then there was the Church in the bondage of Egypt, among the posterity of Jacob, whose sufferings, as well as the plagues inflicted on their oppressors, are familiar to all.

Fourthly, the Church existed under Moses in the wilderness, and also under Joshua, who introduced it into the promised land of Canaan. *Fifthly*, it was under the Judges, who are reckoned thirteen in number to the time of Eli, and whose office resembled in some measure that of the Roman dictators. Under these the times were very corrupt, and both the ecclesiastical and civil state of the Church was very low, as is evident from the falling away of the Israelites, soon after the death of Joshua, to idolatrous worship, their intermarriages and leagues with the Canaanites, the punishments sent upon them from above, their frequent bondage, horrible crimes, and civil wars. *Sixthly*, the church was under Eli the high priest and judge, and under Samuel. The corruption of these times also was very great, through the impiety, sacrilege, and licentiousness of Eli's sons, and the idolatry of the people; whence arose a most afflicted condition to the Church, the Philistines making a great slaughter, and taking the ark, the palladium of the Jewish nation, (1 Sam. iv. 10, 11.) *Seventhly*, it was under Saul, David, and Solomon, which last built that celebrated temple which must be reckoned among the wonders of the world, but under whose reign, towards the latter end of it, religion began to be corrupted, and idolatry introduced, by means of Egyptian, Sidonian, Tyrian, Ammonitish, and other women, (1 Kings xi.)

Eighthly, it was under the kings of Israel and Judah until the Babylonish captivity, from the time when the ten tribes in the reign of Rehoboam, Solomon's son, revolted unto Jeroboam, who had been one of his slaves. During this period also the state of the church was very corrupt, particularly in the kingdom of Israel, after Jeroboam set up a new worship, and changed the ceremonies of religion, to prevent the tribes from going up to Jerusalem. During this period of the church the temple was plundered, the ark removed, the sacrifices polluted, the idols of the heathen worshipped, human blood shed

in sacrifice, in short true religion lay prostrate; and yet there was a reformation several times effected, both by the influence of the prophets, and by the authority of some excellent princes, particularly Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, and Josiah, after whose death there was no further reformation. Add to this, that the land of Israel having been colonized by strangers from Syria, Assyria, Babylonia, and Persia, in the room of the captive Jews, there sprung up a new religion from the mixture of profane and sacred rites, under the name of Samaritanism, as well as the new name of the Samaritans, (2 Kings xvii. 24.)

The *Ninth* period was that of the Babylonish captivity, in which some of the Jews fell away to superstition, as appears from Ezekiel, but others preserved their faith; several prophets were preserved among the people, such as Daniel, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, besides those holy men, Ezra and Nehemiah; and many miracles were performed by God for the preservation and comfort of the church, under Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar, and Darius the Mede.

The *Tenth* period of the church was under the government of Zerubbabel, and the high priesthood of Joshua. Among the priests also of those times must be reckoned Ezra, the scribe, to whom some ascribe the institution of the great synagogue, in which were the prophets Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, Daniel, Nehemiah, Simeon the just, called also Jaddah, who went to meet Alexander the Great, to avert his displeasure. Under these persons the church was reformed, the temple and altar and service restored, the unclean Samaritans rejected, and many other good things performed.

The *Eleventh* period of the church was that under the Asmoneans, or Maccabees. The former name is derived from Asmoneus, an ancestor of Mattathias, and denotes *chief men*, or *venerable priests;* the latter from Judas Maccabeus, the third son of Mattathias, who was chosen general in the place of his father, and who at length obtained the high priesthood along with the supreme power. The learned differ as to whether the word Maccabeus was the surname of Judas, or whether it was derived from the four initial letters on the standard of Judah מכבי (maccabai) Exod. xv. 11. Under these Maccabees there was a cruel persecution raised by Antiochus Epiphanes against the Jews, who spared neither age nor sex, who burned the sacred books, and overthrew all

the institutions of the Jews. Numerous sects also arose under this period—such as that of the Assideans (1 Macc. ii. 42; vii. 13.;) but whether this was the particular name of a sect which added a voluntary obedience to the law, over and above what it required, or whether it was common to all the pious among the Jews, is a question among the learned. Then there was the sect of the *Pharisees*, the origin of which some derive from the members of the great synagogue, of which Ezra was the president; others from the times of Aristobulus, or Alexander Jannæus, King of the Jews, others from the times of Hillel and Schammai under Herod. These maintained the oral law or unwritten traditions; they asserted the stoical doctrine of fate; they highly extolled the power of man's free will to do what is good; they believed in the transmigration of pious souls; they studiously observed celibacy, weekly fastings, the giving of tithes out of every thing, superstitious washings, prayers, alms, &c. There was also the sect of the *Sadducees*, derived from Zadoc, the disciple of Antigonus Sochæus. It arose from Zadoc's misapprehension of his master's meaning; and the members of it believed that there was no providence of God over evil, probably, no providence at all; that there were no future punishments or rewards; no immortality of the soul, no angels, nor resurrection of the dead. Whether they acknowledged only the law, or the prophetical writings also, the learned do not agree. There was also the sect of the *Essenes*, which sprung up a little after the Pharisees; these did not admit into their society any except grave and aged men; they maintained the community of goods, and celibacy; they allowed of no attendants, or provision for a journey; they followed no trades, and superstitiously observed the sabbath; they aimed at piety, beneficence, and hospitality; they gave a four years' probation to their disciples; they avoided all strife and disputes, with many other things. To these sects may be added those of the *Hemerobaptists;* who are said to have denied the resurrection, and who believed that a man could not live godly without daily baptism, whence their name;—*Dositheans*, from Dosithæus, who is said to have set himself up as the Messiah, and to have corrupted the Pentateuch—and the *Herodians*, who, according to some, regarded Herod as the Messiah, applying to him the prophecy in Gen. xlix. 40; just as Josephus applied that in Micah v. 2, to Vespasian.

The last period was that under Herod the Great, in whose reign Christ the Redeemer was born. The state of the church was very corrupt about the time of Christ's coming, as is evident from this circumstance, that the sects above described, and many others, filled all Judea; and especially the sect of the Pharisees, who perverted the law by their interpretations of it, and of the Sadducees, whose impious tenets are so often impugned by the Saviour. Almost all the Jews had false notions of the Messiah that was to come, imagining that he would appear as a triumphant leader, to deliver them from the yoke of oppression under which they groaned. Most melancholy, therefore, was the state of Judea at this time; Pompey, about sixty years before Christ's birth, had made the Jews tributary to the Romans; Gabinius, the proconsul, had divided the great Sanhedrim into five assemblies; Marcus Crassus had plundered the temple; Cæsar had made Antipater, an Idumean, the governor of Judea; C. Crassus had drained the Jews by his exactions, and even sold them by public auction; and Antony had increased their bondage, having beheaded their king Antigonus, who was of the illustrious race of the Asmoneans. Nor was their condition better under Augustus, in whose reign was born the King of men and angels.

CHAPTER V.

OF JESUS CHRIST, AS THE TRUE MESSIAH.

We cannot doubt that Christ has really come, since all those events actually took place, which had been predicted to take place at his coming. Jacob had foretold that the advent of the Messiah should be connected with the taking away of the sceptre from Judah, (Gen. xlix. 10,) for the *Shiloh* in that passage, the ancient Jews, Paraphrasts, and Talmudists, understood to be the *Messiah.* Now this sceptre has for a long time been taken away, the temple destroyed, and the city ruined. Hence the Jews consider themselves to be living in the days of

their banishment, under the power of the Gentiles, without a king or prince. It is absurd to interpret, as some of the Rabbins do, the *sceptre* in Jacob's prophecy to be the *rod* of chastisement; because this prophecy contains a blessing, not a threatening, and because the word *lawgiver* which follows, proves, that *sceptre* is the proper meaning; besides it is not true that the rod of chastisement has never departed from Judah, or that oppression has never ceased, since the nation flourished for many years, from David to Zedekiah. Some, however, think that the word rendered *sceptre* may be rendered *tribe*, as though Jacob predicted that the tribe of Judah should remain distinct until the Messiah's coming, while the other tribes should be dispersed.

Daniel predicted that "from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem," (whether this be reckoned from the death of Darius Nothus, or from the last edict in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes, or whether from the message of the angel, or from the edict of Cyrus, is a question) unto Messiah the Prince there should be seven weeks (i. e. forty-nine years) and threescore and two weeks, (i. e. 434 years) and after threescore and two weeks should Messiah be cut off, &c. (Daniel ix. 25.) Now it is certain that these *weeks* have long since passed away, from whatever period we reckon their beginning, and they passed away before the temple was destroyed, however the Jew may cavil in the way of opposition. The prophet Haggai also declares, that the Lord should "come" unto his "temple," which prediction the Jews understand of the Messiah: "Yet a little while and I will shake all nations, and the Desire of all nations shall come, and I will fill this house with glory. The glory of this latter house shall be greater than that of the former," (Haggai ii. 7, 9,) and Malachi declares, chap. iii. 1, that "the Lord should suddenly come to his temple." Now that temple has been long since destroyed; therefore the Messiah has come.

This is also confirmed by the overthrow of the Jewish commonwealth; by the dispersion of the tribes; by the vain attempts of the Jews to restore their temple and their state in the reigns of Nero, Trajan, Adrian, Constantine, Julian, and other princes; and also by the appearance of various false prophets, such as Theudas, Menahemus, Eleazar, &c. and even in modern times, as Sabatheus Zevi of Smyrna, and R. Mordecai, a German. The same fact is also confirmed by the calling of the

Gentiles, which the prophets foretold should take place at the Messiah's coming; to which may be added the confessions of the Jews, and among other things a tradition of the house of Elias, which divides the duration of the world into three periods—*the first* 2000 *years*, no dispensation; the *second* 2000, the dispensation of the law; the *third* 2000, the dispensation *of the Messiah.** Nor must we omit to remark, that at the time in which Christ came, the Jews were generally expecting the Messiah, as appears from those things which are read concerning Simeon, Anna, and the Samaritan woman.

Now that Jesus Christ was the very Messiah who was to come, may be easily proved, by comparing together every thing which was foretold of him. He was born of a woman, according to the first prophecy, (Gen. iii. 15,) of the family of Abraham, (Gen. xxii. 18,) of the tribe of Judah, (Gen. xlix. 10,) of the family of David, (Isaiah xi. 1; Jer. xxiii. 5). All this is plain from the genealogies of Joseph and Mary, (Matt. i. Luke iii). He was born of a virgin, according to Isaiah vii. 14. He was born at the expiration of the weeks of years mentioned by Daniel, chap. ix. and when "the sceptre had departed from Judah," having been just transferred to Herod the Idumean, and afterwards to the Romans. He was born at Bethlehem, according to Mic. v. 2; Matt. ii. 3—6. He entered into "the second temple" according to Haggai ii. 7. He had a forerunner to prepare his way, Isaiah xl. 2; Mal. iii. 1. He performed innumerable miracles, as the prophets also foretold. He was humbled and exalted, according to the predictions contained in Psalm xxii. cx.; Isaiah lii. The Gentiles also were called, which calling was to be effected by the Messiah according to the prophetical declarations in Gen. xlix. 10. Psalm ii. 8; xxii. 30; lxviii. 32, 33. Isaiah ii. 2, 3; xi. 10; xlix. 6, &c.

Christ came in "the fulness of time," according to the predictions of the prophets, when there was very great idolatry among the Gentiles, and corruption among the Jews, and very great darkness throughout the whole world, which was dispersed by the rising of the Sun of Righteousness, and the Day-spring from on high. He came while the fourth monarchy prevailed, in the reign of Augustus Cæsar, and at the time when by his com-

* So I presume the following singular sentence is to be translated, Bis mille inanitas, bis mille lex, bis mille Messias.

mand the whole Roman world was taxed, i. e. when a census was made. And this took place when Cyrenius or Quirinius was governor of Judæa and Syria, not indeed an ordinary governor, as Saturninus was, but the procurator or lieutenant extraordinary of Cæsar. And this census is said to have been "first made," (Luke ii. 2,) both in regard to Quirinius who first made it, and to Judæa, in which the census had not been before taken by the Romans, and also because it was of an œcumenical nature.

Our Saviour was born under Herod the Great, and had for his forerunner John the Baptist, the son of Zacharias and Elizabeth, of whom the scripture relates many things. John was conceived about six months before the annunciation of the angel to Mary, concerning Christ's birth, when Zacharias and Elizabeth were advanced in years, and while the former was executing his priestly office, in the order of his course. He dwelt for some time in the mountainous places of Judæa, not in caves and desert places, as some have thought, and his food and dress were extraordinary. He preached repentance as the true preparation for the Messiah's kingdom, and baptized according to the custom of the Jews, who baptized their proselytes. He bore an illustrious testimony to Christ, and was the greatest of all the prophets. He was thrown into prison by Herod Antipas, for exclaiming against that prince's incestuous marriage with his brother Philip's wife; and at length was beheaded by his command at the request of his daughter, whom the wicked Herodias had instructed for that purpose, lest Herod, influenced by his reverence for this holy man, should annul the unlawful marriage.

CHAPTER VI.

OF CHRIST'S ASSUMPTION OF HUMAN NATURE.

That Christ, who was God with the Father, "blessed for evermore," assumed human nature, or took upon him

our flesh, is expressly declared in the scripture. "The Word was made flesh," (John i. 14.) "Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself took part of the same," (Heb. ii. 14.) The scripture represents him as having a body, "A body hast thou prepared me," (Heb. x. 5,) a body like our own, material, tangible, requiring food, drink, and sleep, subject to weariness, and pain, to heat and cold. It also represents him as having a soul, endued with understanding and will, and every natural and sinless affection, such as joy, sorrow, anger, love, zeal, and fear. He was therefore a real man, and not the mere image of a man, as was the vain opinion of the Marcionites, Manicheans, and others of the Docetæ, or *imaginary* Christians, as Tertullian somewhere calls them.

It was necessary that Christ should assume our nature, because the justice of God required that sin should be punished in the same nature in which it had been committed. Even the Druids, according to Cæsar, maintained that *the life of man was to be redeemed with the life of man.* Had there been no sin, there would have been no need for a divine person to become incarnate; but sin being introduced, it was necessary that the Mediator of men should take their nature upon himself. It was necessary also, because justice demanded the death, either of sinners or of their surety, and it was only human nature that was capable of suffering death. Besides, the divine nature dwells in light unapproachable by mortals; it was therefore necessary that the Mediator should become man, that we might obtain easier access to the divine nature. It was also required that our Mediator should be both God and man: *God*, that he might have free access to the Father; *man*, that *we* might have access to him: *God*, in order to know all the secret things of the Father that were to be revealed; *man*, that he might declare them to us: *God*, that he might sanctify us by his Spirit; *man*, that he might show us the way to heaven by his example: *God*, that he might satisfy divine justice, and overcome sin, death, and the devil; *man*, that he might offer himself as a sacrifice: *God*, that he might stamp the highest value on his sufferings; *man*, that he might be capable of suffering.

It should not appear strange to the heathens, that God assumed human nature, since they very often speak of their deities as holding intercourse and walking with men. According to the learned Huetius, it is the opin-

ion of the Brahmins, that God often conceals himself under the form of great men, and that Vishna, the second person in their triune deity, has assumed a body nine times, and sometimes a human body, and that he is to do this once more: and Confucius, the great founder of the Chinese religion, has left it on record, that *the Word will at some time or other become flesh.*

As to the manner in which Christ assumed our nature, we say that he assumed it in the unity of his person, i. e. the divine nature was so united with the human, that from this union there were not two persons, but only *one.* The scripture every where speaks of Christ as of one person; the same person who is said to be "made of the seed of David according to the flesh," is called "the Son of God, according to the spirit of holiness;" (Rom. i. 4,) he who descended from the "Father," is also "God, blessed for evermore;" (Rom. ix. 5,) the very same who was "in the form of God," is said to have "taken upon him the form of a servant;" (Phil. ii. 6, 7.) "The Lord of glory" was "crucified," (1 Cor. ii. 8,) and it was "God" who "purchased the church with his own blood," (Acts xx. 28.)

No one, indeed, can explain the exact mode by which these two natures are united; we may, however, observe, that we are not to conceive that this union of natures takes place in the same manner as the union of body and soul, from which some third thing arises, namely, *man;* although the former resembles the latter in many things, and particularly in this, that whatever things properly belong to both natures, the divine and the human, are there spoken of one Christ, and are attributed to him; just the same as all those things which are peculiar to the body and to the soul, are affirmed of one and the same individual. Neither must we conceive of this union, as we do of the union of friends, which consists in the agreement of their minds and wills; for if it only consisted in this, the expressions of scripture would be false, in which it is declared that "God redeemed the church by his own blood," and that "the word was made flesh," for nothing at all resembling this is ever said of friends, whatever agreement there may be between them. Add to which, simple consent would not have been sufficient to give an infinite value to the death of Christ, for although a king might consent to those things which were done by his subject and servant, yet he would not communicate to the act

of his servant the same dignity which the act of the king himself would have. Neither must we conceive of this union under the notion of what the schoolmen call *assistance*, i. e. as if the Word were united to the flesh of Christ, in the same way as a mariner is in the vessel which he moves and guides, or as the Holy Spirit was in the prophets, whom he inspired; for in this way there would be very little difference between the prophets and Christ; and besides, if the case were so, Christ would never have said, "Before Abraham was, I am," for none of the prophets would ever have said such things of himself, nor has any man ever used such expressions as are used concerning Christ in the sacred writings. Further, this union is not like the union of the persons in the Trinity, whose essence is one, whereas in this union there is one *person* and two *natures;* it is also very different from the mystical union of believers with Christ. But this union, whatever may be the mode of it, is very intimate: it has never been nor ever will be dissolved. *What the Word has once assumed, it never lays aside,* so that we must not confound it with the union of angels to the bodies they assumed. By this union also the two *natures* were in no way confused, but each retained its own peculiarities, for there is no proportion between them; *man* is finite, mortal, changeable; *God* is infinite, immortal, unchangeable. This opinion is proved by the frequent opposition in the scriptures between the two natures in Christ, as the two wills which appear to be attributed to him. By this union, neither of the two natures is changed into the other, or done away by the other; for were this the case, either Christ would have ceased to be God, which it is impious to assert, seeing that the divine nature cannot be changed; or he would have ceased to be man, which is contrary to the scripture. We therefore entirely agree with the decision of the council of Chalcedon, held A. D. 451, by which it was maintained that this sacred and mysterious *union* was *indivisible* and *inseparable*, against Nestorius, and without *change* and *confusion*, against Eutyches.

The effects of this union are various; some of them concern the human nature of Christ, others his person as subsisting in both natures. The first effect of the union, *as it regards Christ's human nature*, is that supreme dignity of this nature above other creatures, since by this union it is placed the nearest below the divine nature. The second effect consists in those excellent

qualities which were conferred upon the human nature of Christ, as much as any created being could contain; now although they were of the highest kind, and therefore greater than in any angels or saints, since the Father "gave not the Spirit by measure unto him," yet they were not infinite, but according to the capacity of the receiver. Hence, if the man Christ possessed knowledge, it was capable of increase, as Luke clearly shows, saying that "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man, (Luke ii. 52,) and as is plain from Mark xiii. 32, where Christ declares of himself that he "knows not the day" of judgment. It was not necessary that the humanity of Christ, from the very first moment of its existence, should be endued with those gifts of which it was capable, nor did his office require this, since he was not called upon to execute immediately all the parts of it. Nor can the contrary be inferred from John iii. 34, where God is said to have "not given him the Spirit by measure;" for this only means that the Spirit was given to Christ, not sparingly, but in a plenteous manner.

We do not therefore imagine that any properties of the divine nature were communicated to Christ's human nature; because we must judge of the properties of the divine nature, as of the divine essence, since the former are identified with the latter: now the divine essence cannot be in any way communicated to the creature, because a finite cannot become an infinite being, otherwise it would be God. Besides, this would imply that the properties of one subject may be common to a different subject, which cannot be; for what is the peculiar property of one cannot be communicated to another, unless it should cease to be a peculiar property. But if no property of the divine was communicated to the human nature of Christ, the latter was certainly endued with every possible quality. Here the question is asked by some, whether the man Christ possessed *faith* or *hope*. To this question, which is unprofitable enough, we simply reply, that Christ possessed not that faith, which must be in all that are to be saved, but that which is nothing else than the yielding of assent to the divine word on account of its infallible authority. He also had *hope*, seeing that he expected the glory promised to him after his labours.

The first effect of this union, *as it relates to Christ's person* subsisting in both natures, is that communication

or interchange, by which the properties of *either nature* are attributed to the person, and this is done in various ways. First, sometimes that which is the property of the *divine* nature is attributed to Christ's person, as denominated from the *divine* nature, as when the *Word* is said to have been "in the beginning with God," and also to have been "God." So again, that which is the property of the *human* nature is attributed to his person, as denominated from the *human* nature, as when the *Son of man* is said to have wept, to have eaten, to have drunk. Secondly, sometimes the property or the work of the *human* nature is ascribed to Christ, considered as a *divine* subject, or denominated from the divine nature, as when the "Son of God" is said to have been "made of a woman," "the Lord of glory" to have been "crucified," and "God" to have "purchased the church with his own blood;" for in these passages there is attributed to the divine Son of God what properly belongs to man. On the other hand, the property or work of the *divine* nature is attributed to Christ, considered as a *human* subject, or denominated from the human nature, as when "the Son of man" is said "to be in heaven," at the same time that he was on earth, for this is only strictly applicable to Christ's divine nature. Now this communication or interchange is called by the schoolmen, *the communication of properties.*

The second effect of this union, as it regards the *person* of Christ, is the communion or interchange of office, by which the mediatorial works relating to our salvation are attributed to the person acting according to both natures; as when Christ is called the Mediator of the New Covenant; our advocate; the propitiation for our sins; our peace; wisdom; righteousness; sanctification; and redemption; for these works are applicable to Christ as considered in reference to both his natures; as also when it is said that we are sanctified by the oblation of *Christ* once offered, and that the blood of *Christ* cleanseth us from all sin.

CHAPTER VII.

OF THE TWO STATES OF CHRIST.

The scripture sets forth two states or conditions of Christ, one of *humiliation*, the other of *exaltation*. The former the scripture teaches, when it declares that Christ "made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant," that he "was manifest in the flesh," that he "was made lower than the angels," that he assumed "the likeness of sinful flesh." (Phil. ii. 7; 1 Tim. iii. 16; Heb. ii. 7; Rom. viii. 3.) His state of exaltation it describes, when it says that "God highly exalted him," that he "was crowned with glory and honour," that he "entered into his glory," and "sat at the right hand of God." (Phil. ii. 9; Heb. ii. 7, 9; Luke xxiv. 26.) Both these states had been foretold by the sacred oracles. In Psalm cx. 7, it is said, "He shall drink of the brook in the way; therefore shall he lift up the head." "The stone which the builders refused is become the head-stone of the corner," (Psalm cxviii. 22;) and nothing can be clearer concerning both states than what we read in Isaiah liii. Hence the Jews, not conceiving how such opposite things could happen to the same Messiah, have supposed that there were to be two Messiahs, the one poor or mean, the other triumphant; the one the son of Joseph, or Ephraim, named Nehemiah, who will bring a few out of captivity, and will be slain in the battle against Gog and Magog, though afterwards he will be raised from the dead by his successor, and will enjoy a vicarious dignity; the other the son of David, exalted in royal majesty, to whom will be subjected the twelve tribes, and all the kings of the earth.

It was necessary that Christ should be in both these states, because two things were required to our salvation, that the divine justice should be satisfied, and salvation purchased for us, and that the Holy Ghost should be poured out, and salvation applied to us. To accomplish the first of these, it was necessary that Christ should suffer, and therefore that he should be *humbled*, to accomplish the second, it was necessary for him to be

exalted. By the first the *guilt*, by the second the *defilement*, of our sins was taken away. Christ, as a *priest*, must first have shed his blood, and then have entered into the holiest; as a *prophet*, he was to discharge the office of "minister to the circumcision" among his brethren, before he ascended into heaven to become the teacher of the world; and as a *king*, he was to prepare the way to his throne by sufferings, and by contests.

The humiliation of Christ was in no way unworthy of a divine person; for his sufferings were not involuntary, but voluntary; not the effects either of his own sin, or of his low condition, but of an all-wise providence, and of infinite love: he endured these sufferings, that he might be the Redeemer of men, that he might satisfy divine justice, open the fountain of mercy, and become to mankind the author of eternal salvation; by them he opened the gates of Paradise, purchased eternal life, exalted the glory of the divine majesty and justice, restored to holiness and truth their former beauty, and diffused light, joy, and hope, over the whole world. By this humiliation of Christ, his divine nature was not in any degree lessened, or changed, (for divinity is incapable of any change,) nor did he lose any of his natural and eternal glory, for he ceased not to be what he was; this only followed, that Christ, as God, concealed the glories of his divinity under a veil of flesh, and that, too, a veil of flesh which was weak, miserable, subject to sorrows and disgrace, even to death itself. Yet he did not so conceal himself, but that at times he gave out various appearances of his divine glory, either in the miracles which he performed, or in the wonderful things that happened to him, not only at his nativity, and during his life, but also in the last scenes of that life, and on the borders of death. And as by the humiliation of Christ there was no diminution made of his divine nature, so there was no addition made to it in his exaltation; but, as he was humbled, when he veiled his dignity under the form of a servant, so he was exalted when this veil was withdrawn, and his glory, which he had from everlasting, and which lay hid for a time, shone forth with splendour. To his humiliation belong his *nativity*, *life*, and *death;* under his exaltation are comprehended his *resurrection*, *ascension*, and *sitting at the right-hand of God.* Of these we shall treat separately.

CHAPTER VIII.

OF THE CONCEPTION AND BIRTH OF CHRIST.

The humiliation of Christ commences with his *nativity*, in which several questions are to be examined, namely, when Christ was born—who was his mother—how he was conceived—and what happened at his birth? With respect to the first question, it is more curious than useful. It is, however, certain that Christ was born under Herod the Great, but it is uncertain in what year of his reign; it is equally certain that he was born under Augustus Cæsar, but in what year is unknown; it is not even known from what time the Augustan era is to be dated; whether from the death of Julius Cæsar, or from his first consulship, or from the triumvirate, or from the victory at Actium, or from the giving of the title of Augustus. As to the month and day of the nativity, it is rash to determine, whether on the 6th day of January, as the eastern churches of Jerusalem, Egypt, and Asia maintained; or on the 25th of December, which is the common opinion, and is of considerable antiquity, and very particularly maintained in the Western and Latin church, and afterwards generally received by the Greeks, the Syrians, and the Egyptians. It is best to restrain any further inquiry; only let us add, that the 25th day of December began to be a festival among the Christians in the time of Chrysostom; but not throughout all the east before the time of the emperor Justin, in the sixth century.

With regard to the second question,—who was Christ's mother? We reply with the scripture, That it was the Virgin Mary, espoused to Joseph, of the tribe of Judah, of the seed of David, being the daughter of Heli. This the evangelists Matthew and Luke declare; and Isaiah had predicted that he should be "born of a virgin." (Isaiah vii. 14.) We will not here relate the stories concerning this blessed virgin, which some have not been ashamed to maintain, respecting her wonderful birth, and education in the temple, or even in the holy of holies, and her vow of perpetual virginity, together with the examination of her chastity by means of a certain priest. To relate

these and similar stories is to refute them. From the substance of this blessed virgin was formed the body of our Saviour; so that we must not dream with the Valentinians, that his body was sent down from heaven, and that the body of the Virgin was like a channel through which it passed; or with other heretics, that any portion of the Word was changed into flesh, and that his divinity, like a soul, formed his flesh. These notions every one will pronounce absurd, who only considers, that Christ is expressly called, "the seed of the woman, the seed of Abraham, the son of David, the fruit of his loins, the fruit of Mary's womb;" and that he is said to be "made of a woman, a partaker of flesh and blood, in all things like unto us, sin only excepted." (Gen. iii. 15; xxii. 18; Matt. i. 1; Luke i. 31, 42; Gal. iv. 4; Heb. ii. 14, 17.)

If it be asked, why Christ was pleased to be born of a virgin, no one can give a satisfactory answer; it may be sufficient to observe, that Christ would not be produced by immediate creation, like Adam, in order that he might be our brother, formed out of the same lump, and that he might have the most intimate union with us. He would not also be begotten in the same way as other men, both to avoid the necessity of another miracle, the sanctifying the seed of the woman and the man, and also because an extraordinary person required an extraordinary birth, and to teach men by this circumstance, that he was not a mere man. At the same time, he was pleased to be born of a woman, like other men, to show that he was really man, though not of the seed of a man, and also that he was something else besides man. How an infant could be born of a virgin, no one will wonder, who considers the reply of the angel to such a question, "With God nothing shall be impossible," (Luke i. 37.) Whether Mary remained a virgin always, the scripture does not inform us, though it may be piously believed, and indeed it seems probable, that that womb in which our Saviour received the beginning of life, was rendered so sacred by such an inmate, that his mother ever afterward continued a pure virgin; which was the opinion of the fathers in opposition to Helvidius and others.

As to the third question—how Christ was conceived—the scripture declares, "that which is conceived in her, is of the Holy Ghost," (Matt. i. 20.) "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee," (Luke i. 35.) In which words there

is perhaps an allusion to the cloud descending upon the tabernacle, and overspreading it, so as not only to cover the door, but also to fill the tabernacle itself with the glory of the Lord. The moment the cloud overspread the tabernacle, the glory of the Lord entered it, and filled it within and without. Now the body of Mary resembled the tabernacle; into it the divinity of the Word entered, the moment that the Holy Ghost overspread as it were this body; so that the work of the incarnation, hitherto unknown to men, and incomprehensible even to the angels, was effected by divine power.

The interposition of the Holy Ghost was necessary, both to exert a generative power in the womb of the virgin; to form out of it the body of Christ; to preserve both the body and soul of Christ from all stain of sin, and to prepare it for the hypostatical union, i. e. of both natures. But whether by the Holy Ghost we are to understand the third Person of the Godhead, or the divinity of Christ, has been disputed. Some of the fathers thought the latter; most divines maintain the former, and for this reason, that Luke, both in his first chapter, where the name of the Holy Ghost occurs six times, and also in the following chapters, in which he is frequently mentioned, always means the third Person of the Trinity, and therefore it is not probable that in the single passage alluded to a different meaning should be given to the same term. But if the third Person of the godhead is meant, as is the common opinion, we must not imagine that the Holy Ghost is the *father* of Christ, merely because Christ is said to have been conceived by him; for the human nature of Christ was not produced from the substance of the Holy Ghost. It is one thing to form something by one's own power from matter taken from some other quarter, and another thing to produce it from one's own substance. Now the Holy Ghost did the former, not the latter.

As to the fourth question—what took place at the birth of Christ? we may remark the place of his nativity, Bethlehem, according to the prophecy, in Micah v. 2. We may mention also his humble cradle, namely a manger, although some choose to understand by this term, something else than the common meaning; and the angelic messenger who annouced the tidings to the shepherds. Many other stories which are related, about the *cave at Bethlehem*, the *silver manger*, &c. are altogether fabulous.

CHAPTER IX.

OF THE LIFE OF CHRIST.

The first thing to be observed in the life of Christ is his circumcision, which was the shedding of his first blood, and was a part of his humiliation, since he was pleased to become subject to the law, and to "fulfil all righteousness." Now by his circumcision he showed that he had really taken our flesh, he proved that he belonged to the seed of Abraham, he confirmed, as it were, in his own body the circumcision of the fathers, and ratified the promises made to them, and he became a suitable "minister of the circumcision," (Rom. xv. 8.) He also thereby showed that he meant "to fulfil all righteousness," i. e. the obedience due to God's commandments; that he acknowledged the people of Israel for the true people of God; that he was not opposed to Moses; and that having thereby undertaken to fulfil the law, he would deliver us from its curse. (Gal. iv. 5.) And the name *Jesus*, given to him according to custom at his circumcision, reminds us of the salvation obtained for us by him; in which he had two remarkable types, of the same name,—Joshua, who led the Israelites into the promised land,—and Joshua, the high priest. Among the Greeks and Romans some great men were called *Saviours*, as Hercules, Quintus Flaminius, and others; as appears from ancient coins. What a certain Rabbi among the Jews is reported to have said, is worthy of remark. *Because the Messiah will save men, he shall be called* Joshua; *but the nations of another kind (the Gentiles) who shall embrace the faith of the Messiah, will call him* Jesus; *and therefore you will find this name Jesus alluded to in* Gen. xlix. 10, *for the first letters of the word in that verse will form the name Jesus.*

We say nothing of the presentation of Christ in the temple; of Simeon's embracing him in his arms; of the coming of the wise men, their worshipping him and offering him gifts; of the flight into Egypt, and other circumstances; but we may remark his living with his parents in reverence and subjection to them, which was

no small part of his humiliation. We may question whether he laboured at any trade, or at the trade of his father, as was the opinion of Justin, Basil, Chrysostom, and others; but there can be no doubt that this period of his life was spent in sacred meditation, and in preparation for the duties of his great office. We must remark also the baptism of the Saviour, by which he commenced his ministry, when he was about thirty years old, which was the period at which the priestly office commenced under the law, (Numb. iv. 47,) and the age at which Joseph was elevated to the government of Egypt, (Gen. xli. 46,) and David to the kingdom, (2 Sam. v. 4.) He was baptized by John the Baptist, the son of Zacharias and Elizabeth, who had been spoken of under the name of Elias. Now he chose to be baptized by John, that he might fulfil all righteousness, and submit to every ordinance, that he might confirm and seal John's ministry by his own authority, that he might show that the power and efficacy both of the old and new sacraments depended upon himself alone; and that the sacrament of baptism might be received by Christians with the greatest reverence, after the example of their Saviour. In that baptism he was solemnly consecrated to the mediatorial office, by the voice of the Father from the opened heavens, and by the descent of the Holy Ghost upon him in the shape of a dove.

Next we may observe his fasting forty days and forty nights in the wilderness, by which he showed himself not inferior to Moses and Elias. This was followed by the temptation of the devil in the same wilderness, who three times assaulted the Saviour, but was three times vanquished; and thus he who had triumphed over the first, was subdued by the second Adam. These temptations show us what an enemy we have to fight with, after we have devoted ourselves to Christ; with what weapons Satan attacks us, and with what arms he must be overcome; and that no one should promise himself exemption from that warfare from which the Son of God was not exempt. We may remark, also, the preaching of Christ, by which he vindicated the law from the false glosses of the Pharisees, attacked the traditions of the Scribes, reproved their hypocrisy and pride, and unfolded the mysteries of the gospel.

But we must particularly notice the miracles of Christ, concerning which it may be observed—1. That they were innumerable, John xxi. 25. 2. That they were

done in the presence of many witnesses, so that Christ cannot be said to have courted secrecy; and thereby he distinguished himself from impostors. 3. That they were universal, having for their subjects all creatures; devils, the sea, the winds, &c.; all kinds of diseases, and even death itself. 4. That they exceeded the powers of nature, and of the devil; for the devil cannot raise the dead, or feed several thousand men with a few loaves. 5. That they were of a beneficial character; being deliverances from evil, excepting only two, viz. the sending of the devils into the swine, and the cursing of the fig-tree; to which may be added the casting out of the buyers and sellers from the temple; thus the miracles of Christ were distinguished from those of Moses and the prophets, which were chiefly of a terrific character. 6. That the effects of them were permanent, not momentary and transient. 7. That they were often performed by a single word, such as "*I will, be thou clean*," (Matt. viii. 3.) 8. That Christ gave to others the power of working miracles in his name, (Matt. x. 8; Luke x. 9.) One thing more may be added, viz. that Christ never wrought miracles for his own advantage; and although hungry and thirsty, and holding all creatures in subjection to himself, he chose to support nature in no other than the ordinary manner; for as he came only for the good of others, so he devoted himself wholly to their advantage.

We must consider also, the wonderful obedience which Christ paid to the law, not only in circumcision, but also in every thing else prescribed by the law. He was bound to this obedience, not only as man, and as the creature of God,—not only as a son of Abraham, but also as our *surety;* for two things were required of us, viz. to fulfil the commandments of the law, and to suffer the punishment due to our sins. Neither of these we were able to do, but Christ performed both for us. As man, he was not obliged to observe the divine law in the same way as men who live upon earth, but only as the saints who are in heaven. Therefore it was a part of Christ's humiliation, that, having to live upon earth for a time, he chose to keep those laws to which mankind were bound as sinners against God.

Finally, we may notice the duration of Christ's ministry, which, according to some, was four years, but according to others, and with greater probability, three years and some months; thus he is thought to have kept

four passovers—the *first*, in which he purged the temple, (John ii. 13;) the *second*, in which he healed the sick man on the Sabbath, at the pool of Bethesda, (John v. 1, 2;) the *third*, mentioned in John vi., which at that time was nigh; the *fourth*, a little before his death.

CHAPTER X.

OF THE SUFFERINGS AND DEATH OF CHRIST.

Under the humiliation of Christ are especially comprehended his *sufferings*, i. e. all those things which Christ endured for our sins, beyond the *natural* inclination of his will, although he voluntarily endured them; but especially those which he suffered at the end of his life, of which we must now speak. And in order that we may do it with precision, we observe that he not only suffered in body, but also in soul, as is evident, not only from the testimony of scripture, (Matt. xxvi. 38; John xii. 27,) but also because our salvation required that the surety of those sinners who had sinned in soul and body, and to whom the law threatened not only bodily, but also spiritual and internal sufferings, should also suffer both in soul and body. We observe, also, that these sufferings were very great and grievous, though not eternal; the sinner deserved eternal suffering, but the infinite dignity of Christ's person was an equivalent to infinity of duration. These sufferings were free from every spot of sin. Some of them preceded, others accompanied the death of Christ. Of the former kind were those which he endured in the garden of Gethsemane; for he was then "in an agony," and the anguish of his soul was so great, as to wring a bloody sweat from his body. Now this was occasioned either by his intense sorrow compressing the greater vessels of the heart, and also the lesser vessels of the veins, and by this compression wringing blood from them; or by the contrary motions produced by sorrow on the one hand, so compressing, and by love and the desire of delivering mankind on the

other hand, dilating, the vessels and veins, so that blood issued out of them. It was this deep sorrow which also extorted from him that petition, "Oh! my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt," (Matt. xxvi. 39.) Now the cause of this anguish was not merely a natural fear of death, for in this case he would have shewn greater weakness than many martyrs, but chiefly the sense of divine justice, which penetrated his soul in a manner to us inexplicable. There were other sufferings which immediately preceded his death; as when his sacred name was covered with reproaches, his head lacerated with thorns, and smitten with a reed, his face disfigured with spitting, and bruised with blows, his tongue parched with thirst, and steeped in vinegar and gall, his hands and feet pierced with nails, and his body extended on the cross between two malefactors. In all these sufferings Christ displayed a supreme love towards God, a deep submission to his will, an ardent desire to fulfil his commission, the greatest confidence in his Father, the greatest hatred of sin, and the greatest patience and love towards mankind. His sufferings, also, were all in the way of satisfaction, not only those which he sustained during the three hours of the solar eclipse, while hanging on the cross, and before he breathed out his soul, but those also which he suffered from the beginning of his life to his crucifixion. For he could not thus have suffered, except as a surety; for if we do not admit the idea of suretyship, Christ cannot be regarded in any other light, than as an innocent person who ought not to have suffered.

Christ not only *suffered*, but also *died*; otherwise he could not have satisfied God's justice; for justice demanded the death of the sinner, and God had denounced this upon Adam; our surety, therefore, was obliged to suffer it in our stead, nor could sin have been more effectually atoned for, than by the deepest humiliation of the creature, such as death is; and by death Christ "destroyed him that had the power of death," (Heb. ii. 14.) Nor should it seem strange that he died the death of the *cross*, for we deserved a death on which rested the curse of God; now that of the cross was an accursed death; at least he who was crucified was pronounced accursed, and crucifixion was the sign of a curse resting upon him who suffered, as it is written, "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree," (Deut. xxi. 22, 23.) It was necessary,

therefore, that our surety should suffer such a death, to deliver us from the curse. This the apostle teaches us, saying "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, for it is written, Cursed is, &c." (Gal. iii. 13.) And so it had been predicted, "The assembly of the wicked inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet:" (Psalm xxii. 17.) for it is almost universally agreed that the word *pierced* is the true reading of this passage. There are various questions raised about the form, the parts, and the size of the cross; there is also a tradition that this cross was found by the empress Helena, as it is recorded by Ambrose, Paulus Ruffinus, Nicephorus, and others; but Eusebius mentions nothing about it in his history, in his life of Constantine, or in his Chronicle.

Christ was led away to the cross from the sentence of the *judge*, after he had been arraigned at his bar, in order that by his condemnation to death, his satisfaction for our sins might be more evident, as it would not have been if he had died a natural death. Nor will it be amiss to observe, that Christ was judged by a Gentile authority, in order that it might appear that "the sceptre had departed from Judah." The Gemara* of Babylon records a tradition that Christ was crucified on the evening of the passover, and that a herald for forty days previous had proclaimed *He who has deceived, imposed upon, and seduced Israel, is coming forth to suffer; whoever can make any defence for him, let him come forth and produce it;* but they found no defence for him; therefore they hanged him on the cross on the evening of the passover.

We need not enlarge upon all those events which either preceded or attended the death of Jesus, such as the treachery of Judas, the backsliding of Peter, the tergiversation and sentence of Pilate, the *seven* last words of Christ, the supernatural eclipse of the sun, the shaking of the earth, the rending of the rocks and of the veil of the temple, the opening of the graves; these events are well known, and are copiously treated of by all commentators. We will only remark, in reference to those words of the Saviour, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me," that we must not imagine that he was

* The *Gemara* contains the Jewish comments or explanations of the *Mishna*, or collection of the Jewish traditions, which were drawn up by one of the Rabbins about the middle of the second century.

entirely deserted by the Father, but only that the latter withheld the sense of his favour, and the communications of comfort, until the Son had endured all the punishment due to us. Therefore Christ, when he made the complaint, yet still addresses God as *his* God. The Saviour of the world, therefore, was not so forsaken, as if the Deity entirely left the humanity it had assumed; nor as if God suspended the communications of divine holiness, with which the soul of Christ was always endued; nor as if God withdrew his protection, for he was always at his Son's right hand, nor was the latter ever left alone; but he is said to have been deserted, because he was, for a short space of time, deprived of the sense of divine love, and felt the wrath of God hanging over him.

The fruits and effects of Christ's death are, satisfaction to God's justice, remission of sins, reconciliation with God, complete redemption, entire victory over Satan, the world, and sin, together with the obtaining of the heavenly inheritance. The death of Christ also shows to us the deep misery of mankind, the punishment due to our sins, the unspeakable love of Christ, and the severity of divine justice. It is also a rich source of consolation, and a most powerful motive to Christian virtues.

CHAPTER XI.

OF CHRIST'S BURIAL AND DESCENT INTO HELL.

The death of Christ was followed by his burial, (Matt. xxvii. 59, 60. Mark xv. 43. Luke xxiii. 50.) This had been predicted by Isaiah liii. 9, "He made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death," also in Psalm xvi. 10. Now Christ was buried, in order that we might have no doubt whatever concerning his death; therefore Mark, not without reason, records that Pilate did not give up the body for interment before he had fully ascertained the fact of Christ's death. We may regard it, indeed, as wisely ordained by providence that he should be buried, not by enemies, who would not have

scrupled to bear him to the tomb half-alive, but by friends, who would never have buried him while he was yet breathing. He was also buried, in order that he might gain a more glorious triumph, by delivering his body from corruption, in the very grave which is the habitation of death; and also that he might sanctify our graves, so that we might no longer feel terror from death, or from the grave, perfumed with the odour of his life-giving death.

We have a remarkable type of Christ's burial in Jonah, mentioned by Christ himself, (Matt. xii. 40,) who was in the whale's belly three days and three nights; which story was borrowed by the heathens, who pretended that Hercules, having been swallowed up by the dog Carcharias, sent by Neptune, remained in his stomach three days, whence he was called τριέσπερος, (*i. e. he of the three nights*) and afterwards came out with the loss of his hair. The time of Christ's continuance in the grave was not three whole days; he expired on Friday, about 3 o'clock in the afternoon, there being three hours before the setting of the sun, which three hours are reckoned as the first day; then followed the whole sabbath from evening to evening, which was the second day; night followed, at the morning dawn of which Christ rose again.

He was laid in the grave of another; so great was his poverty, that while alive he had not where to lay his head, and when dead he needed the kindness of another to supply him with a grave. Here we may take notice that Christ was buried by Joseph of Arimathea, who had been his secret disciple; one Joseph, the husband of Mary, had taken charge of Christ at his birth; the other Joseph took charge of him at his burial. With Joseph was joined Nicodemus, who "brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pound weight," (John xix. 39.) For it was the custom of the Jews to embalm their bodies, which custom they derived from the Egyptians, with this difference, that the latter having taken out the bowels, anointed the inside, the former only the outside, of the body. The form of the Jewish sepulchre was very different from ours. The more wealthy persons were accustomed to hew out a cave in a rock, which had first an open space before the entrance, and then on both sides the hollow part or cave, four cubits lower than the open space, which hollow part again had its cavities or niches, some eight, some thirteen, in which

the bodies were deposited. Christ's was a *new* sepulchre, in order that no one might have it to say, that some one else was buried in his stead, or that he was raised up by the power of some other who had been buried there before him.

As to the *descent of Christ into hell*, mentioned in the Apostles' Creed, it must be remarked *first*, that this article is omitted in almost all the ancient Creeds. Hence Ruffinus, in the beginning of the eighth century, testifies that this article is not read in any creed of the Eastern churches, or in that of the Roman church, but only in the creed of the Aquileian church. It is found, indeed, in what is commonly called the Creed of Athanasius, but it is very doubtful whether Athanasius was the author of it, and whether this Creed was known to the church before the sixth century. Some creeds, which entertained this article of Christ's descent into hell, altogether left out that of his *burial*. It is not, however, to be denied that the creed of Aquileia contained both articles, and that the Arians, as Socrates relates, composed a creed at Constantinople, in which they profess their belief in Christ as dead and buried, and also as having penetrated the places under the earth, an object of terror to the infernal regions. It was believed by many of the fathers that Christ really descended into hell, as Justin Martyr, Clemens Alexandrinus, Irenæus, Origen, Eusebius; and perhaps their opinion was the cause of this article being inserted in the Creed.

It is, however, not true that Christ descended into the place of the damned, whatever those fathers believed; for the soul of Christ, immediately upon its separation from the body, went into paradise, according to his promise to the penitent thief, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise," (Luke xxiii. 43.) For what reason should he have gone down into hell? Was it that he might there suffer any thing? But he finished every thing on the cross. Was it to deliver the ancient fathers? They had been already received into paradise. Was it to preach to departed spirits? Preaching belongs only to the state of this life, not to the state of the next. Was it to bring the condemned out of hell? But, according to the scripture, their torment will have no end. Was it to display his victory in the sight of devils? In this case his descent into hell would rather be a part of his exaltation, than of his humiliation; and, besides, there was no need to descend thither to make

his victory known to devils, for they could not be ignorant of it. But there is no occasion to contend much about the meaning of this article; every one can interpret it as he pleases, either of the spiritual torments of Christ, with Calvin, Beza, and others, or of his lowest condition under the dominion of death in the grave, and in this sense there will be a striking antithesis between his *death* and *his resurrection to life*, between *the grave* and *his ascension to heaven.* Lastly, we must here greatly adore the love of Christ, who was pleased to continue for a time in the deepest humiliation, that he might exalt us to the highest glory.

CHAPTER XII.

OF THE RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION OF CHRIST.

Having treated of Christ's *humiliation*, we must pass on to his *exaltation*, of which there are three degrees, viz., His *resurrection from the dead*, his *ascension into heaven*, and his *sitting at the right hand of God.* To begin with his *resurrection.* Christ would not have the apostles doubt concerning it; for he not only announced it by angels to the women, but confirmed it himself by his frequent appearances, of which the scripture mentions eleven, viz., to Mary Magdalene alone, to the women on their return from the sepulchre, to the two disciples on their way to Emmaus, to Simon Peter alone, to the disciples assembled in Jerusalem, Thomas being absent, to all the disciples, eight days after, Thomas being with them, to seven disciples at the sea of Tiberias, whi'e fishing, to the eleven disciples on a certain mountain of Galilee, to more than 500 brethren, to James by himself, and lastly to all the apostles on the day of his ascension on Mount Olivet. Besides these appearances, the miraculous outpouring of the Holy Spirit confirmed the truth of Christ's resurrection; for this was a very striking proof of his being alive. He also appeared after his ascension to Stephen, to Paul, and frequently to John, as recorded in his Revelation.

Nor have we any reason to doubt the testimony of the apostles; no one will believe that they were deceived, since they testify of that which they had seen, and which they had handled, as it were, not once, but frequently; still less will it be believed that they intended to deceive, since by their testimony they brought upon themselves so many evils—hatred, imprisonment, stripes, and death itself, when at the same time it especially concerned them to testify the very contrary, if Christ had not really risen, because in this case they had been miserably deceived by him. This resurrection had been foretold in many places of the Old Testament, (Psalm xvi. 10; Isaiah liii. 10, &c.) Hence Christ maintained his own resurrection from the scripture, (Luke xxiv. 45, 46.) And Paul declares that he "rose again according to the scriptures," (1 Cor. xv. 4.) It was also represented by various types, as those of Noah, Isaac, Joseph, Moses, Jonah. He rose again the third day after his burial, on the first day of the week, very early in the morning; and his resurrection was attended with an earthquake, and with the glorious presence of angels.

Various reasons present themselves, on which the resurrection of Christ was founded. It concerned the Father's honour, that the Son, having made full satisfaction for sin, should not remain, as if guilty, under the dominion of death. The Prince of life could not continue any longer under the bonds of death, nor could the divine nature permit his body, the temple of deity, to remain under the power of death. It was also rendered necessary by all the offices which Christ had to perform. As it had been necessary for him to die, in order to *purchase*, it was also necessary for him to rise again, in order to *apply*, the blessings of salvation. The resurrection was also necessary, as the foundation of the faith and hope of the church; for "if Christ be not raised, our faith is vain, we are yet in our sins," (1 Cor. xv. 17.) And so again, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved," (Rom. x. 9.) And Christ is said to have been "declared the Son of God with power, by the resurrection from the dead," (Rom. i. 4.) Our faith, therefore, in the divinity of Christ is confirmed by his resurrection. Moreover, he rose again by his own power, as he expressly declared, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up," (John ii. 19); and also that he "had power to lay

down his life, and power to take it again," (John x. 18.) Yet this resurrection is oftener ascribed to the Father, because, in the work of redemption, the Father stands in the relation of a Judge, who, as he had "delivered Christ for our offences," was bound to "raise him again for our justification." No rational person will ever believe that the disciples of Christ stole away his body from the sepulchre, as the Jews pretend. The words of the Christian poet Sedulius on this subject are worth transcribing,—

Fare, improbe custos,
Responde, scelerata cohors; si Christus, ut audes
Dicere, concluso furtim productus ab antro
Sopitus jacuit, cujus jacet intus amictus?
Cujus ad exuvias sedet angelus? anne beati
Corporis ablator velocius esse putavit
Solvere contextum, quam devectare ligatum?
Quum mora sit furtis contraria, cautius ergo
Cum Domino potuere magis sua lintea tolli.

Say, impious band of hireling keepers, say,
If, as ye dare assert, his followers stole
Christ's sacred body from the guarded tomb,
Whose funeral garb is this which lies within?
Could venturous thieves have thought it best to waste
The time in slow unloosing of the bands,
Nor bear away the corpse in grave-clothes wrapped?
A long delay like this ill favours theft—
If theft were here, far likelier had it been
To take away the corpse and clothes and all.

His body was raised from the dead a glorious and heavenly body, free from all imperfections, both those which are merely animal, and those which sin has brought into the world. If he ate and drank after his resurrection, this did not arise from human want, but entirely from his divine condescension, and also to demonstrate the reality of his resurrection. Yet it was the same body in substance; visible, and limited within space, as before, but different in its qualities. It is also probable that his body had not that glory on earth which it now has in heaven; and in this manner he was pleased to consult the weakness of his disciples, who would have been much less able to bear the splendour of Christ's glorified body, than the Israelites the shining face of Moses, (2 Cor. iii. 7). We may add that Christ was pleased to sojourn on earth forty days after his resurrection—not a shorter space of time, in order that there

might be full proof of his resurrection—not a longer, lest he should countenance the error of his disciples, who imagined that they were again to enjoy the personal presence of their Lord.

The benefits which flow to us from the resurrection of Christ are, *first*, our Justification, (Rom. iv. 25.) For God by releasing his Son from the prison of death, into which he had been cast for our sins, declared thereby that satisfaction had been made to his justice, even to the uttermost farthing. *Secondly*, our Sanctification; whence we are said to be "risen with him through faith of the operation of God, who raised him from the dead," (Col. ii. 12). He received life, not only for himself, but also for his people; and he who purchased the gift of the Spirit by dying, conferred that gift by rising again. *Thirdly*, the proof and pledge of our own resurrection. Christ is "the first fruits; afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming," (1 Cor. xv. 23.) "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you," (Rom. viii. 11).

The other step of Christ's exaltation is his *ascension into heaven*, by which, on the fortieth day after his resurrection, in the presence of his disciples, he went up with his glorified body from the earth, and from mount Olivet, through the air and the visible heavens, into the third or highest heavens. The scripture clearly records this event, when it declares that he was received, carried, or taken up into heaven, (Mark xvi. 19, Luke xxiv. 51; Acts i. 9.) The prophecies concerning it are very plain. Thus, Psalm lxviii. 18, "Thou hast ascended on high," &c. A most illustrious type of Christ ascending to heaven, was the High Priest, when entering once every year into the Holy of Holies. Add to this the translation of Enoch and Elijah to heaven; only these were carried up by the power of another; Christ ascended by his own power. The place from which he ascended was Bethany, not that town situated beyond Mount Olivet, fifteen furlongs from Jerusalem, (John xi. 18,) but a tract, or part of mount Olivet. We reckon as fabulous what is related by the ancients, namely, that in the place in which Christ stood for the last time, it was not possible to lay the pavement, when the empress, Helena, built a church there; and that even the marks of his footsteps were visible. Perhaps the error arose from the words

of Eusebius, who in his life of Constantine declares that Helena *paid a becoming reverence to the footsteps of the Saviour*; this, which was said of Judea in general was improperly applied to mount Olivet. Perhaps, also, the error arose from mistaking the words of Zechariah, "His feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives."

The *cloud* which received the Saviour, and carried him up to heaven, was not intended as a vehicle, like the chariot of Elijah, but was a visible symbol of the divine Majesty. *Every where*, says Bede, *the creature does service to the Creator; the stars point out his birth, and veil him when suffering; the clouds receive him ascending, and will accompany him when returning to judgment.* The *heaven*, to which he ascended, is not God himself, nor heavenly glory and blessedness, but *the third heaven*, the abode of the blessed, the sanctuary not made with hands, into which our high priest was to enter, not with the blood of others, but with his own. (Heb. ix. 24.) "I go," says Christ, "to prepare a place for you, that where I am ye may be also," (John xiv. 3.) "Seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth," &c. (Col. iii. 1.) Into this heaven Christ ascended, in the sight of his apostles, and amidst the plaudits of angels, not by a mere withdrawing of his visible presence, but by a real and local translation of his human nature, as is clearly laid down in the sacred scripture. Nor was the vast distance of the heavens from the earth any obstacle to his ascension; for although, according to the greatest astronomers, the starry heaven is distant from us upwards of ninety millions of miles, and even although the distance were greater, still we must allow it to be finite or limited; and therefore it was possible for the distance to be got over in a small space of time, since no motion of any body can be imagined so swift, but that there may be supposed a motion still swifter; and this we shall easily conceive, when we consider the divine omnipotence, and the nature of a glorified body.

Now it concerned the glory of the Father, to raise his only begotten Son, who had suffered so many things, to that glory which he had merited. It was due to the Son himself, to rejoice in the right which he had acquired, and having gloriously vanquished his foes, to enter the temple of glory in his triumphal chariot. There it was necessary for him to appear, as a *Priest*, before the presence of God within the veil, after having offered his sac-

rifice on earth; so necessary indeed, that, as the apostle argues, "if he were on earth, he should not be a priest," (Heb. viii. 4.) There, too, it was necessary that he should sit as a prophet, to teach the human race, and to erect his throne as a *king*, that he might hold the reins of government over the universe, and rule his church, which was to be established in every part of it. The salvation of the church also rendered his ascension necessary; for it behoved Christ to ascend, that he might open to us the kingdom of heaven, intercede on our behalf, prepare a place for us, pour out his Holy Spirit, elevate our minds to heavenly things, and assure us of our own future ascension into heaven. And therefore by this event faith and hope are strengthened, love is increased, and numberless motives to holiness are furnished to us.

With regard to Christ's sitting at the right hand of God, which is so clearly mentioned in Scripture, (Psalm cx. 1; Matt. xxii. 43, 44; Eph. i. 20; Rom. viii. 34,) this is not to be understood literally, since God has neither a right hand nor a left hand, but figuratively, to denote the supreme dignity and dominion of Christ; the figure being borrowed from the custom of kings and great men, who placed at their right hands those to whom they wished to show distinguished honour. Thus Solomon's mother sat at his right hand, (1 Kings ii. 19.) and the mother of Zebedee's children asked that her sons might sit at the right and left hand of Christ in his kingdom. Thus Suetonius relates that the emperor Nero placed Tiridates, king of Armenia, beside him on his right hand; and in the Sanhedrim, the *father of the house of judgment* sat at the right hand of the *chief* of the assembly, who communicated every thing to him. This *session* therefore denotes the supreme majesty and glory of Christ, who has been inaugurated as King and Head of the church, and has received "a name above every name," (Phil. ii. 9, 10; Eph. i. 20; Heb. i. 3;) and also the supreme dominion which he exercises over all creatures, as Paul explains it in 1 Cor. xv. 25, where the expression *to sit at the right hand*, is explained by that of *reigning*—"he must reign;" thus it denotes the regal and judicial authority of the Saviour, as kings and princes are accustomed to *sit*, when they exercise their authority. It may also denote his rest after the termination of his laborious work—"Sit thou at my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool," says the

Father, thereby as it were taking upon himself the remainder of the work, viz. the subjugation of his enemies.

CHAPTER XIII.

OF THE MEDIATORIAL OFFICE OF CHRIST IN GENERAL.

HAVING spoken of Christ's *state*, we must now speak of his *office;* which is designated by various names, but especially by the following: 1. By the name of *Redeemer*, which particularly belongs to him, as having redeemed us from the fourfold slavery of *sin*, the *law*, *death*, and the *devil;* and that by paying a price, not in gold and silver, but his own blood. 2. By the name of *Saviour*, which is the same as Jesus, and which eminently applies to Christ, who procured for us a deliverance, not temporal, such as Moses and Joshua procured for Israel, but a spiritual deliverance; and who has proclaimed it to us in his gospel, and applies it to us by his Spirit, and who will give us the full enjoyment of it at the last day. 3. By the name of *Christ*, or *Messiah*, i. e. *anointed*, (Psalm ii. 2; Dan. ix. 25.) because he was anointed, like the kings, priests, and prophets of old, who were thus consecrated to their several offices. 4. By the names of *Immanuel*, i. e. *God with us*, (Matt. i. 23.) the *Servant of the Lord*, the *Son of Man*, the *Angel of the Covenant*, the *Captain of our Salvation*, the *Author and Finisher of our faith*, the *Surety of the New Testament*, and the *Mediator*, (Isaiah liii. 11; Dan. vii. 13; Mal. iii. 1; Heb. ii. 10; xii. 2; vii. 22; 1 Tim. ii. 5; Heb. viii. 16; ix. 15; xii. 24.)

Now there are three characters in which a human mediator appears—that of a simple *messenger* or rather *interpreter* for both parties, as Moses was, who stood between God and the Israelites, to deliver the word of the former to the latter—that of an *intercessor* or *advocate*, who undertakes to plead before one party in behalf of the other—and that of a *surety*, who reconciles those who are at variance, by making satisfaction to the of-

fended, and engaging for the future obedience of the *offending* party. Now in all these characters Christ is our Mediator. For he was the messenger or interpreter between God and us. He declared the will of God to mankind, John i. 18, in which sense he is called the "angel of the covenant," (Mal. iii. 1.) and the "counsellor," (Isaiah ix. 6.) Again, he is our intercessor and advocate, who pleads our cause before God, (1 John ii. 1.) He is also our Surety and Redeemer, who by his own blood obtained for us peace with God, and performed all that was necessary to be performed on the part of God, and on the part of man. That it may further appear in what way Christ is our Mediator, we must examine what was required in the *person*, and in the *work* of the Mediator. With regard to the former, it behoved him to be *man*, to be *holy*, and to be *God*. *Man*, because he was to die, which could not be the case with God, or with an angel; and also that we might have an easier access to him—*holy*, because a sinner, being not acceptable to God as a sinner, needs such a mediator, (Heb. vii. 26.) and *God*, because a finite being cannot offer a price of infinite value, nor endure the weight of God's displeasure. Now Christ was all these—he was man, partaker of our flesh and blood, and therefore capable of suffering—he was holy, being entirely free from all sin—and he was "God over all, blessed for evermore," the only Son of God, to whom the Father can refuse nothing. As to his *work*, it was required of our Mediator, to make satisfaction to God, and to intercede for us; to subdue the heart of man, and to destroy in us our hatred to God; to reconcile man with the other creatures, and so to unite himself with us, that we might be one body—all which Christ fully performed, and still performs, by the merit of his death, reconciling God to us, and procuring the pardon of our sins, and continually interceding on our behalf; and also by the power of his Spirit, uniting us to himself through faith, so that we on our parts are reconciled to God.

From what has been said we infer, that both the divine and human nature of Christ are concerned in the mediatorial work, all the parts of which required the concurrence of both these natures, as we shall see presently. We infer also that Christ is our only mediator, as the apostle expressly tells us, "There is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus," (1 Tim. ii. 5,) which is also evident from what has been already

said concerning the necessary requirements in the mediator, viz., *redemption* and *intercession*, between which the scripture makes no distinction; for no one can be a mediator of intercession, who is not also of redemption: these are the two parts of mediation, which are inseparable, and which the apostle joins together, (1 John ii. 1, 2,) as under the law it belonged to the high priest alone to enter into the sanctuary, and make intercession for the people.

But this mediatorial office is divided into three parts, viz., his *prophetical*, *priestly*, and *kingly* office. These the scripture attributes to Christ, setting him forth sometimes as a *prophet*, (Deut. xviii. 15, 18; Isaiah lxi. 1;) sometimes as a *priest*, (Psalm cx. 4;) sometimes as a *king*, (Psalm ii. 6.) The whole three offices are introduced in Psalm cx., as also in Zech. vi. 12, 13, and in John xiv. 6, where Christ calls himself "the way, the truth, and the life;" and Paul declares that he "is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption," (1 Cor. i. 30.) There were three things required touching our salvation. This salvation was to be *proclaimed*, *obtained*, and *applied;* Christ, therefore, was to proclaim it as a *prophet*, to obtain it as a *priest*, to apply it as a *king*. Again, by the fall these three effects were produced: we were sunk in the deepest ignorance, we incurred the hatred and curse of God, we became the subjects of sin and death; the *first* of these evils is remedied by the prophetical office of Christ, the *second* by his priesthood, the *third* by his kingly office. And with this threefold office may correspond the three Christian graces of faith, hope, and charity; *faith* embraces the doctrine of the *Prophet*, *hope* relies upon the merit of the *Priest*, and *charity* or *love* bows to the sceptre of the *King*. There were three sorts of men who in this respect were types of Christ, viz., prophets, kings, and priests; but besides the infinite difference between the types and the antitype, no single individual among the former held these three offices at the same time. Melchizedek indeed was both a king and a priest, and David was a prophet and a king; and sometimes there were found priests who were also prophets; and although Moses was not only a prophet and leader of the people, but also before Aaron's consecration, discharged the office of the priesthood, (Exod. xxiv. 6—8,) this was an extraordinary and particular case. To these three offices Christ was consecrated by *anointing;* hence he

is called *Messiah*, and is said to have been anointed by God with the "oil of gladness," (Psalm xlv. 7.) Now to understand this, we must remember that the prophets, and priests, and kings, of old were consecrated to their respective offices by being anointed with oil; there is, indeed, but one example of a prophet being anointed, viz., that of Elisha, (1 Kings xix. 16,) and even this anointing might be understood figuratively of a simple appointment to the office; but the priests under the law, the sons of Aaron, were anointed, as also the kings of Judah. Now the oil with which Christ was anointed was not the typical oil, but the influence of the Spirit, "the unction of the Holy one," and his being anointed with this implied both his appointment to this Mediatorial office, and the communication of the gifts necessary for the discharge of this office. Christ was thus anointed and consecrated, in his *conception* by the Holy Ghost; in his *baptism*, when the Holy Spirit visibly descended upon him, as he was about to enter on his public ministry; (Matt. iii. 17;) in his *transfiguration*, when the Father commanded him to "be heard;" (Matt. xvii. 5;) and after his *resurrection and ascension*, when he was "made both Lord and Christ," (Acts ii. 36,) and "a name was given to him above every name," (Phil. ii. 9.)

CHAPTER XIV.

OF THE PROPHETICAL OFFICE OF CHRIST.

To begin with the first of these three offices, we observe, that it was most necessary; because there can be no knowledge of God and divine things without revelation; "the natural man not receiving the things of God," (1 Cor. ii. 14;) and because no condition is more wretched than that of man, sunk in ignorance of divine things; and no salvation can be expected in such a condition. This being premised, in order to have a clear understanding of this office of Christ, we may consider what

are the duties of the prophetical office, and how Christ performed these duties.

Now the duties of this office were to teach the way of salvation, to foretel future events, and to confirm the doctrine by miracles and by perfect holiness of life. Now Christ did all these things; for, *first*, he taught the way of salvation, expounding the law, and preaching the gospel. With respect to the *law*, he explained its true meaning, he vindicated it from the false interpretations of the Pharisees, and inculcated inward and spiritual obedience, in opposition to the merely outward righteousness of those persons. With respect to the *gospel*, he taught those saving mysteries, which were before either unknown to men, or obscurely known, and which had not been taught by the law or by nature. Again, he foretold future events, such as the destruction of Jerusalem, and the end of the world, the calling of the Gentiles, the abrogation of the ceremonial law, the persecutions of his followers, his own sufferings, crucifixion and resurrection, the denial and the martyrdom of Peter, the treachery of Judas, and the destinies of the church, as revealed to John. *Thirdly*, he confirmed his doctrine by the most perfect holiness of life, by the most stupendous miracles, and finally by his most precious death.

Christ exercised this office both *immediately*, i. e. in his own person in the days of his flesh, and *mediately*, by his ministers; and this too, both before his incarnation, by the *prophets*, in whom, as Peter declares, "was the Spirit of Christ," (1 Pet. i. 11,) and hence Christ is said by the Spirit to have "preached to the spirits in prison" (i. e. the antediluvians who are *now* condemned in hell; (1 Pet. iii. 19,) and also after his ascension, by his *apostles* and other ministers. He also exercised this office both *externally*, addressing the outward ears by his word, and *internally*, by turning and moving the heart by his Spirit. When he discharged his prophetical office on earth, his hearers admired the authority, wisdom, freedom, eloquence, and zeal of his instructions. No one, indeed, can sufficiently admire the parables, the exhortations and reproofs of Christ. There is nothing which can be compared with the sayings of Christ, either in the epistles of the apostles themselves, although there is in them an extaordinary force and spirit, or in the writings of the prophets, in which however we see a certain sublimity, and a kind of modest vivacity. Who,

indeed, is not astonished at the facility with which the Saviour replied to the carefully prepared sophisms, the difficult dilemmas, the puzzling questions, the entangling subtleties, of the Pharisees and Sadducees; all of which Christ disposed of in such a manner, that even his most obstinate enemies were struck with amazement.

He far exceeded all other prophets, as the antitype exceeds the type, and the body the shadow; they were servants, Christ a Son, the Teacher of teachers; they only taught outwardly, he writes the law inwardly on the heart; to them the Spirit was given only by measure, to him without measure; the Spirit by which the prophets were inspired was not the spirit of the prophets, but the Spirit with which Christ was filled was the Spirit of Christ; he uttered his prophecies from no other influence than the fulness of the Godhead dwelling in him; his sanctity of life was unspotted, and his miracles were performed by his own power. If the prophets sometimes knew the secrets of the heart by the revelation of God, even this seldom occurred; whereas all things were "naked and open" to Christ as God, and nothing was hid from his infinite knowledge. This prophetical office of Christ was often foretold in the Old Testament, especially in that remarkable passage,—"A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me," (Deut. xviii. 15,) which Peter applies to Christ, (Acts iii. 22.) And that God here speaks of the Messiah, is evident, not only because the words refer to one individual, and not to more than one, but because God declares that he shall be like unto Moses; and the Jews confess that there has been yet no prophet like unto Moses. Christ is said to be given "for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles," (Isaiah xlii. 6; xlix. 6.) He is also introduced, saying, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings," &c, which words Christ declared to be fulfilled in himself, (Luke iv. 21.) He is also called, "the Angel of the Covenant," "the Counsellor," "Eternal wisdom," &c.

CHAPTER XV.

OF THE PRIESTLY OFFICE OF CHRIST.

THE second part of Christ's mediatorial office is his *Priesthood.* The necessity of it is proved by the same arguments which prove the necessity of satisfaction, which therefore we need not repeat. Christ is set forth under this character in scripture—"Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek," (Psalm cx. 4.) "And he shall be a priest upon his throne," (Zech. vi. 13.) And he is set forth under this character in the whole of the Epistle to the Hebrews. His priesthood was shadowed by various types, especially by the Levitical priesthood, and that of Melchizedek. He was called to the office by his Father; for "Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten thee," (Heb. v. 5.) The office of a priest was to perform these three things,—*First*, "to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins," (Heb. v. 1.) *Secondly*, to intercede for the people, (Joel ii. 17,) which was the peculiar office of the high priest on the day of atonement, when he entered into the holy of holies with the censer of coals, and the blood of the goat, (Lev. xvi. 12, 15.) *Thirdly*, to bless the people, (Num. vi. 23; Deut. xxi. 5.)

Now all these things Christ performed; for *first*, he offered a sacrifice for sins—"through the eternal Spirit he offered *himself* without spot to God," and "by one offering hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified," (Heb. ix. 14; x. 14.) By this oblation of himself Christ hath truly satisfied for us, as is proved from those places in which he is said to have redeemed us by the price of his blood; for where a price comes in, there is real satisfaction, (Matt. xx. 28; 1 Cor. vi. 20; 1 Pet. i. 18.) From these and similar places it is clear that our redemption was not effected merely by *free manumission*, as in the case of slaves, who are set at liberty by their masters; although we are said to be saved by the *grace* of God; nor merely by an exertion of *power*, as when captives

are rescued from the hand of the enemy; although we have been delivered from Satan's tyranny by the mighty hand of the victorious Redeemer; nor yet by a simple *exchange*, such as usually takes place in war; although indeed Christ was put into our place; but our redemption was effected by a just and proper *satisfaction* in the payment of a price. The same truth is evident from those passages in which Christ is called an "offering" for men, and a "propitiation," (Eph. v. 2; Heb. ix. 14, 28; Rom. iii. 25; 1 John ii. 1; iv. 10.) The latter expression alludes either to the expiatory sacrifices of the Old Testament, or to the covering of the mercy-seat. Also, from those passages in which he is said to have "borne our sins," to have been "wounded, afflicted, dead." (Isaiah liii. 5—7; 1 Pet. ii. 24,) and especially in which he is said to have been made "sin," and "a curse for us," (2 Cor. v. 21; Gal. iii. 13.) We may add those passages, in which Christ is set forth to us as the *true priest*, properly so called, superior to all the Levitical priests, who by the offering of himself hath appeased the wrath of God, and obtained eternal salvation, and in which we are said to be "reconciled to God by his blood," (Rom. v. 10; Col. i. 20.) Nor is it strange that men are said to be reconciled to God, and not God to be reconciled to them; for this is the common way of speaking among all nations; when a prince is offended with a subject, if the subject make satisfaction to the prince, he is said to be reconciled to the prince, not the prince to the subject (though the latter is also the case). So our Lord exhorts a man who "remembers that his brother hath aught against him," *to be reconciled to that brother*, because he has offended him; and thus the heathen expressed themselves; for Tecmessa is introduced saying that Ajax had come ὡς καταλλαχθῃ θεõις χολꙋ, *that he might be reconciled to the gods on account of their anger*. We may observe under this head that not only has Christ made a *real*, but also a *perfect* satisfaction; which cannot be doubted, when we consider the dignity of his person, which gave an infinite value to his sacrifice, and when we look at the plain testimony of scripture, which says that "by one offering he hath *perfected for ever* them that are sanctified." Heb. x. 14.)

Secondly, Christ intercedes for us, like the high priest, who, after he had offered the victim on the altar, carried its blood into the holy place, and there prayed for the

people. The necessity of this intercession is sufficiently shown, not only because it was not enough to have purchased salvation, unless it were perpetually secured and applied; but also because we are not such characters as can draw near to God of ourselves, and therefore have need of a most influential advocate to plead our cause before God, against the continual accusation of the devil. But when we say that Christ intercedes, we must not imagine that he falls down at the feet of his Father, or uses any prostration of his body, as a suppliant; for this idea is inconsistent with the glorified state and kingly authority, which he possesses both in heaven and in earth. It simply means, if I may so express it, Christ's continual *appearance* in heaven before the Father; for the Father cannot look upon him without being appeased; and thus his appearance is equivalent to intercession, and has the same effect, as if Christ were to fall before his Father covered and stained with his own blood, and display before him his wounds and scars; thus the blood of Abel is said to have *spoken* or *cried out*. It may denote, also, his unchangeable purpose of saving his elect, and also his presentation of our persons and prayers for acceptance before God; thus he is represented as the "angel with the golden censer and incense to be offered with the prayers of the saints," (Rev. viii. 3.) Now this intercession is opposed to the twofold accusation, which the devil, "the accuser," brings against us, and which our own sins bring against us, provoking the anger of God.

Thirdly, Christ blesses us, like the priests whose mode of blessing is recorded in Num. vi. 23, but this blessing of Christ does not consist in bare words, like the blessing of man, but in the real communication of "spiritual blessings."

The priesthood of Christ far excelled the Levitical priesthood. The Levitical priests were mere men; Christ was the true Son of God. They were sinners who "needed to offer for themselves also;" He was holy and undefiled, who needed to offer for us only. They were different from the victims which they offered; he was the priest and the victim at the same time. They were many in number; he was one, who needed no substitute or successor. Again, the Levitical priesthood was instituted "without an oath;" the priesthood of Christ "with an oath," (Heb. vii. 20, 21.) The former was "according to the law of a carnal commandment;" i. e. with

various ceremonies of an external and transitory nature, which were adapted to the mortal and perishing condition of human nature (for God had declared that the priesthood of Aaron should not be perpetual, and therefore provided successors continually); the latter was "after the power of an endless life;" i. e. according to a law adapted to the nature and condition of Christ, whose life cannot be destroyed by any casualty, nor perish after any series of ages. Moreover, the Levitical priesthood was "weak and unprofitable," only expiating sins *typically;* but that of Christ really expiates all sin, and is effectual to our justification and sanctification; the former was imperfect, and therefore repeated its sacrifices; but the latter was perfect, and needed no repetition of its sacrifice; and finally, the one only lasted a certain time, the other is eternal. We may just add that Christ is said to be "a priest after the order of Melchizedek," because, like Melchizedek, he had no successor, or predecessor, and because he is the true "king of righteousness and peace," "without father," in regard to his human nature, "without mother," as it respects his divine nature, uniting in himself the kingdom and priesthood, like Melchizedek, who was both a king and priest, and who is said to be "without father and mother," because the names of his parents were not written in the genealogy; and who had "neither beginning of days, nor end of life," because his birth and death are not recorded, thus representing the eternity of Christ, who is "from everlasting to everlasting."

The fruits of Christ's priesthood are, full satisfaction to God's justice—our reconciliation with God—remission of our sins—the gift of the Spirit, of faith, hope, love, and other graces—the opening of heaven—and the betrothing of the church to himself. By the discharge of his priestly office, the Saviour displayed the great love of God towards mankind, his own matchless love towards them, and the deep hatred of God against sin. We should therefore learn hence to hate sin "with a perfect hatred," but at the same time to repose the fullest trust and confidence in Christ, and to love him with all the power of our souls.

CHAPTER XVI.

OF THE KINGLY OFFICE OF CHRIST.

Christ's mediatorial office, in the third place, is *kingly*. His dominion is of two kinds, the one *essential*, which he possesses with equal glory and majesty with the Father and the Holy Ghost; the other *mediatorial*, which he possesses as Mediator, and of which we are now to speak. This regal dignity is predicted in many places of the Old Testament, (Psalm ii. 6; lxxii. lxxxix. cx. Isaiah ix. 5, 6; xi. Zech. vi. 13; ix. 9,) and was remarkably typified by the reigns of David and Solomon, the former of whom represented Christ suffering and militant, the latter, Christ reigning and triumphant: hence the angel in announcing his birth declared, that he should "reign over the house of Jacob," (Luke i. 33.)

Now the office of a king is to enact laws, to govern the people, and to defend them against their enemies, all which things Christ performed. For he has given us his laws; his law is the gospel, "the law of liberty, the law of the spirit of life," by which he hath "brought life and immortality to light," and which is accompanied by the influences of the Holy Spirit in his people. According to these laws he governs his people, with righteousness, wisdom, mercy, and holiness, and he will also judge the world according to them. He protects and defends his subjects, and renders them victorious over all their enemies; in short, the administration of Christ's kingdom may be rightly said to consist in the calling and gathering in, in the preservation and government, in the protection and defence, and at length in the full and complete glorification of his church. Such a king we needed, —one who could apply and preserve the salvation he had purchased, and under whose protection we might be secure against all the powers of the world and of hell.

The subjects of this kingdom are all Christian *believers*. The *arms* of the King are his word and his grace; the *enemies* of his government are lies, errors, superstitions, idolatry; in short, Satan, sin, death, and the world. It is a *spiritual*, not an earthly kingdom; which latter as-

saults, or is assaulted with carnal weapons and forces, and which professes to dethrone kings. Its *king* is a spiritual king, the Lord from heaven; its *throne* is the heart of man, therefore it is called "the kingdom of heaven;" its *sceptre* is the word of the gospel; its *subjects*, spiritual men, born not of flesh, but of God; its *government* is not by might of arms, but by the Spirit; its *laws* are spiritual, its *weapons* spiritual, its *blessings* spiritual, being the remission of sins, righteousness, the gift of the Spirit, and eternal life.

The commencement of this regal dignity was discoverable during the life of Christ. It was seen in his *birth*, when the wise men worshipped him; in his *life*, as when Nathanael called him "the king of Israel," and when he made his triumphant entrance into Jerusalem; and in the very moment of *death*, when even Pilate, though unintentionally, acknowledged him to be a king: but he gave the clearest proofs of his royalty after his resurrection and ascension, when he sent down the Spirit from heaven, gathered in his church through the apostles, subjected to himself the kingdoms of the world, and began to overthrow antichrist. This mediatorial kingdom may be regarded under three characters—as the kingdom of *power* over all things, angels as well as men, but with a particular reference to the church;—as the kingdom of *grace*, set up in the church militant;—as the kingdom of *glory*, which is established over the church triumphant.

This kingdom will be everlasting; Christ will be always acknowledged the king and head of the faithful, though there will be a different mode of administration. For after the last judgment, Christ will no longer govern the church through ecclesiastical ministrations; he will, as it were, give up to God the disposal of his office, and will present the church before his Father's presence, "a glorious church;" and then the eternal God will, without the interposition of a mediator, communicate himself to his saints; and thus "God will be all in all." (1 Cor. xv. 24, 28.) Then Christ also himself, as it regards his human nature, will be subject to God, yet without any diminution of the glory he enjoys.

But we must not omit here, that Christ admits us into some sort of participation in his three offices, since he gives us that "unction" or "anointing," which makes us kings, priests, and prophets. That the faithful are made *prophets* is inferred from various passages in

which they are said to be "taught of God," (Isaiah liv. 13; John vi. 45,) "to have an unction from the Holy One, and to know all things," (1 John ii. 20.) They are under an obligation, as the prophets of old, to teach others, to maintain the truth, to contend with errors and vices, to profess the name of Christ, to promote his kingdom, and to "show forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light;" not to mention, that in the infancy of Christianity, many received the gift of prophecy. That they are also made *kings* and *priests*, Peter teaches us, (1 Peter ii. 9, and John, Rev. i. 6.) Their priesthood consists in their being near to God; so that they can approach freely at any time; in their offering the sacrifices of praise, thanksgiving, and devoted obedience; in their frequent attendance on the sanctuary and ordinances of God; and in their sacrificing the old man and its affections and lusts before God. They are also *kings*, seeing that God hath given them "all things," (1 Cor. iii. 21, 22.) They are inaugurated in baptism; they overcome the world; they subdue their sins, and the lusts of the flesh; they tread Satan under their feet; they possess the spiritual riches of the divine word and the divine grace; and they look forward in hope to a crown of glory.

CHAPTER XVII.

OF THE COVENANT OF GRACE.

The first covenant having been broken by the fall of man, the justice of God could have inflicted punishment; but we have beheld him pitying the human race, and giving his Son to satisfy justice by his death, and thereby entering into a new covenant with mankind; concerning this covenant we must now speak a little more particularly. It will not be amiss to observe here, that the scripture appears to intimate a certain covenant between the Father and the Son; by which, however, we understand no more than the will of the Father giving

the Son to be the Head and Redeemer of men, and the will of the Son in giving himself as a surety for them; for the scripture represents the Father as requiring from the Son obedience unto death, and in return promising to him a name above every name; and the Son as offering to do the will of God, and accepting the promise of a future kingdom and glory. The Father is introduced as speaking to the Son in this manner,—"I have called thee in righteousness, I will give thee for a covenant of the people—that thou mayest be my salvation to the ends of the earth," (Isaiah xlii. 6; xlix. 6); and therefore the Son is represented as saying, "This commandment have I received of my Father," (John x. 18.) Again the Father is introduced as saying, "He shall see his seed, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand"—"Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance," (Isaiah liii. 10; Psalm ii. 8); and the Son as saying, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. I have glorified thee on the earth, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do, and now, O Father, glorify me," &c. (Psalm xl. 7, 8; John xvii. 4, 5.)

God having thus entered into covenant with our Surety Christ Jesus, was pleased also to enter into covenant with us in him. Now this covenant we define to be, a free and gratuitous agreement between an offended God and offending man, in which God promises to man pardon and salvation through the merits and satisfaction of Christ, and man on his part promises faith and obedience. The only author of this covenant is God, who alone could raise fallen man, and make a new covenant in the place of the old. God is here considered as offended, but at the same time as a merciful Father, capable of being propitiated, and willing to be reconciled to offending man. *Man*, with whom the covenant is entered into, is considered as a sinful creature, but conscious of his guilt and misery. The Mediator of the covenant is Christ. In this covenant God promises that he will be *our God*, which promise includes both our reconciliation and communion with him, and also the communication of those good things which are necessary for us, particularly holiness, life, and immortality. Again, God requires from us that we should be *his people*, namely, he requires of us faith, repentance, worship, and obedience, all which he produces in us by his Spirit. The *seals* of this covenant are the sacraments. It is called the *new* covenant, because the old is abolished,

and the covenant of *grace*, because man in no way whatever could merit it, but God of his mere mercy entered into it with man; and also to distinguish it from the first covenant, which is called the covenant of *works*, which was entered into with Adam, and renewed on Mount Sinai.

These two covenants indeed agree with each other in various particulars:—of both, God is the author; in both there are the same contracting parties; in both is promised eternal life and happiness: but they differ also in many respects; in the covenant of works God is considered as *Creator* and *Lord*, in the covenant of grace as *Redeemer* and *Father;* in the first there were was *no mediator*, in the second Christ is the Mediator; in the one God dealt with man as *upright*, in the other he deals with man as a *sinner;* the former depended on man's own obedience, the latter depends on the obedience of *Christ;* in the former was promised *life*, namely, a state consisting of all good things; in the latter is promised *salvation*, which, along with life, includes also deliverance from sin and death; in the first God required *works*, saying, *Do this and live;* in the second he requires *faith*, saying, *Believe, and thou shalt be saved.* The covenant of grace does indeed require works of righteousness, but not that we may merit eternal life by them; nor does the imperfection of Christian obedience, provided it be sincere, stand in the way of our salvation.

Since the covenant of grace was made in Christ, it may be inquired, whether it was in operation under the Old Testament, before Christ's coming; the answer, however, is easy. We can have no doubt that it did operate under that Testament, when we consider, that the covenant of grace under the New Testament is the same with the covenant formerly made with Abraham. (Luke i. 68, 70, 72, 73.) Hence the apostle adduces the justification of Abraham by faith as a pattern of our justification. (Rom. iv.) Nor was there anything set forth in the covenant under the New Testament, that was not set forth to Abraham, renewed to Moses, and confirmed both during and after the captivity. There was the same Mediator under the Old as under the New Testament, namely, the seed of the woman, the seed of Abraham, the messenger of the covenant, even Christ, "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever," (Heb. xiii. 8,) by whose grace the fathers were saved equally with ourselves. (Acts xv. 11.) And let it not seem

strange, that the fathers were saved by Christ's death, although he appeared in the world after their death; for moral causes may be in operation before they are made manifest. We observe farther, that the condition of the covenant was the same under both dispensations, namely, *faith*, which was "imputed unto Abraham for righteousness; (Gen. xv. 6,) and that there were the same promises, such as *justification*, *remission of sins*, *santification*, and *eternal life;* for Abraham is said to have "looked for a city which hath foundations," and Jacob declared that he "waited for the salvation of the Lord." (Psalm xxxii. 1, 2; Jer. xxxi. 34; Deut. xxx. 6; Ezek. xxxvi. 26; Heb. xi. 10; Gen. xlix. 18.) Job also declares that he "knew his Redeemer lived," (Job xix. 25); and David was persuaded of his own resurrection. It is true, the promises of the New Testament are said to be "better," (Heb. viii. 6), but this is said, because they are more clearly set forth, more deeply impressed, and more widely extended; otherwise no promises can be more excellent than those which were made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The sacraments, also, both of the Old and New Testament signified the same Saviour, and the same blessings.

But although the covenant of grace existed under the Old Testament, yet there is a difference between the two economies, not in the substance of the covenant, but in the mode of the dispensation. The *old* dispensation looked to Christ as yet to come, the *new* to Christ as already come. The period of the old dispensation was the period of night, the Sun of Righteousness having not yet arisen: for divine mysteries were covered with the veil of ceremonies; the face of Moses had a veil over it, and therefore the Apostle says that "the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest." (Heb. ix. 8.) But the period of the new dispensation is that of the day, the veil of ceremonies and types being withdrawn; whence we are said "with open face to behold the glory of the Lord." (2 Cor. iii. 18.) The one had the *shadow* of future good things, the other the *substance;* under the former was the spirit of bondage, seeing that the Spirit of God stirred up in the ancient saints motions agreeable to the condition of servants; under the latter is the spirit of liberty, the spirit of adoption; for "where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." (2 Cor. iii. 17.) The old economy also was very severe, exacting a rigid obedience to the law, there-

by compelling men to look forward to Christ; but the new economy is mild and gracious, more frequently resounding with evangelical promises, without however excluding injunctions of obedience to the law; and besides, there is added a larger effusion of the Holy Spirit's comforting and sanctifying influences. Lastly, the old economy was confined to one nation, and was destined to last only till the first coming of Christ; whereas the new is extended to all nations alike, and will remain till Christ's second and final advent.

But because on this subject the expressions which divines are accustomed to use, are very often confounded, we must observe, that the name of the *old covenant* is sometimes given to that covenant, which was entered into with our first parents before the fall, and which was renewed on Mount Sinai; and sometimes to the covenant of grace, which was established with our first parents after the fall, and was confirmed under the old dispensation. Hence it happens that there is a different mode of expression; sometimes speaking of the old covenant as altogether different from the new, since in this case by old covenant is meant the covenant of works made with innocent Adam; at other times saying, that the old differs only from the new covenant in the mode or manner, the old covenant here meaning the covenant of grace made after the fall. Should any one ask why the covenant of grace, being one and the same, was dispensed in a different mode, first obscurely, then clearly, it may be answered, that it was agreeable to the divine wisdom to deal in one way with the church, while in its infancy and childhood, in another way when it arrived at years of maturity; and also, that it was consistent with the nature of things for the times or periods to be darker, in proportion to their distance from the rising of the Sun of Righteousness.

CHAPTER XVIII.

OF THE ABOLITION OF THE LAW.

BEFORE we leave this part of the subject, some questions are to be settled. *First*, it may be inquired whether the *moral law* is altogether abrogated under the New Testament. To this we reply—that this law has no longer that use which it had in the state of innocence, when it was the means of obtaining life and happiness: it can now no longer justify. (Rom. iii. 20; Gal. iii. 12.) Believers also are no longer under the curse of the law, since "Christ hath redeemed them from it, being made a curse for them." (Gal. iii. 13.) Yet the law is not abolished with regard to moral regulation; since it is always a perfect rule of conduct, the brightest transcript of God's purity, most clearly delineating the features of inward and outward rectitude, and therefore we are bound to observe it. It is also a *bridle* to restrain the passions of men, which would otherwise break out, and a *mirror*, in which we see our own sinfulness and weakness, and the just judgment of God against sinners. Now we prove that the moral law is not in this sense abrogated, because Christ and the apostles commend it, and inculcate the observance of it, (Matt. xxii. 36, 37; Rom. xiii. 8, 9,) and because without good works we can expect no salvation, for "without holiness no man shall see the Lord." (Heb. xii. 14.) Christ has delivered us from the curse of the law, but not from the obligation of obedience to God, which is indispensable to the creature; nay, "being made free from sin," we thereby "become the servants of righteousness." (Rom. vi. 18.) If we are no longer "under the law," as a covenant to obtain life, as Adam was; or under it as a schoolmaster, as the Israelites were; yet we are under it, as a perfect rule of conduct, according to which we must rightly frame our lives and conversation. Nor should we be deterred from obeying it, on the ground of its increasing or giving strength to sin, (Rom. vii. 5, 8, 13,) for this is only *by accident*, through the corruption of man, who is inclined to forbidden objects; as a high-mettled horse more

proudly resists his rider, the more tightly he is checked by the bridle; neither should we be deterred on the ground of the law being "the letter that killeth," (2 Cor. iii. 6,) for it is thus called, when we consider it apart from the promises of grace, and in contradistinction to the ministration of the gospel.

The case is not the same with the *ceremonial* as with the moral law: for although it is useful to meditate on the doctrine which is represented under that law, yet the faithful are not at all obliged to observe it. Christ having been now manifested, there is no further need of a schoolmaster; (Gal. iii. 25,) and the distinction between nations having been taken away by Christ, there is no occasion for "the middle wall of partition;" (Eph. ii. 14,) while, the debt having been paid by him, "the hand-writing is blotted out." (Col. ii. 14.) In short, the *truth* having been exhibited, there is no more room for *figures*. Now the abolition of this law had been predicted, along with the promise of the new covenant, (Jer. xxxi. 31, 32, &c.) and also in Dan. ix. 24—27, where the Messiah, it is said, "shall seal up the vision and the prophecy, and cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease;" and in Psalm cx. 4, where a new priest is foretold; for, according to the apostle, "the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law," (Heb. vii. 12.) To which we may add what is said concerning the taking away of "the ark of the covenant," (Jer. iii. 16, 17.)

Further, let it be observed, that the ceremonial law was only made for the Israelites; it was abrogated when the Gentiles were called to the knowledge of God; hence the apostles require from us no other than spiritual sacrifices, Rom. xii. 1. 1 Peter ii. 5.) The true God is no longer to be worshipped at Jerusalem, the temple being destroyed; he is everywhere to be worshipped "in spirit and in truth." Indeed how could it be possible, that the Indians, the Europeans, or the inhabitants of the most distant regions north or west, should go to Jerusalem three times every year to keep the festivals; and be continually travelling thither, as often as they happened to contract any guilt or impurity? what city, or what country could be capable of containing them? whence could they procure so many victims, and altars for so many victims? whence could they obtain a sufficient supply of frankincense, oil, and salt? The more rational Jews acknowledged the impossibility of all this, and

therefore maintained, that many of the ceremonies were not originally designed by God; that they were figures and representations of spiritual things; that in the time of the Messiah they would be allowed to eat swine's flesh, and other things unclean; that all the festivals, except two, would be done away; and that all the sacrifices would be abolished, except that of thanksgiving.

The ceremonial law was virtually abolished by the death of Christ, who on the cross "blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us;" but its *actual* abolition was accomplished at different times and by degrees. The ceremonies were not done away immediately after Christ's ascension; hence the apostles observed them, partly that they might win or conciliate the Jews, partly that they might put an end to the old dispensation in the most decent and becoming manner. Paul would have Timothy to be circumcised; he performed his vow of shaving his head; and the apostles assembled in the council at Jerusalem, though they would not impose on the Christians the intolerable yoke of ceremonies, yet commanded them to "abstain from meats offered to idols, and from things strangled, and from blood," (Acts xv. 20, 29,) because the Jews, chiefly on account of these things, professed their aversion to the Gentiles. Yet were these ceremonies, which were observed for a time, afterwards abrogated by the apostles, when they saw them abused by the Jews and false prophets; hence Paul would not circumcise Titus, and sharply reproved Peter for Judaizing, (Gal. ii. 3, 4, 11, 12.) They finally ceased to be observed at all after the destruction of the temple; and this was not a simple abolition, one in which a thing ceases to exist, without any other to succeed in its place, but rather a consummation, or perfecting; where, in the place of something imperfect, something more perfect succeeds.

In the mean time, from the abrogation of the ceremonial law we are not to infer the abrogation of all ceremonies whatever in the Christian church; for outward rites are necessary for the sake of good order, and are aids to divine worship; provided they be not imposed as matters of absolute necessity, and as being meritorious, and be not so multiplied as to form a servile yoke for the oppression of Christians. These ceremonies differ from the ceremonial law. This signified a Saviour that was to come, those set forth one that has come, the

latter was a necessary part of divine worship at that time, the former are only adjuncts of divine worship.

As to the *political law* of the Jews, that has been abolished in two respects; *first*, as it served to distinguish the Jewish commonwealth from all others, and as it was a type of the Redeemer's kingdom. Now there is no longer any difference between Jews and Gentiles in Christ, (Gal. iii. 28,) and the Messiah having appeared, there is no need for his kingdom to be typified. *Secondly*, it is abrogated in those things which are of particular obligation, and which were only applicable to the Jews; as the law concerning the marriage of a brother's wife, the law of divorce, the jubilee, the first-born, the sowing of fields with different seeds, &c. &c. But it is not abrogated in those things which are of universal obligation, being founded on the law of nature; which serve for the explanation of the Decalogue, and are found in the New Testament. The Jewish nation may be considered in two characters, as a people, and as the Jewish people; whatever applies to them simply as a nation, can be applicable to others; but whatever applies to them as the Jewish nation, is of no more obligation upon us, than the laws of the ancient Assyrians, Persians, Greeks, and Romans, or the municipal laws of any foreign nations.

CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY.

BOOK THE SEVENTH.

OF CALLING AND FAITH.

CHAPTER I.

OF CALLING IN GENERAL.

HAVING treated of Christ as the Mediator, it remains that we should treat of the benefits which are received through him. The first benefit is *calling*, by which however we are not to understand what is very often meant by this term; for any kind of pursuit or mode of life is termed a *calling*, (1 Cor. vii. 20,) and *an election* to any office, whether political or ecclesiastical, as to a kingdom, priesthood, or apostleship, is termed a *calling* in the scripture. But by the word here used, we understand *an act of God's grace*, by which men, destitute of saving knowledge, and dead in sins, are called, through the preaching of the gospel, and the power of the Holy Spirit, from a state of sin and condemnation, and from the dominion of Satan, unto communion with Christ, and to the obtaining of salvation in him. This same act of grace is also called a *creation*, in which God "calleth the things that are not, as though they were," and a *re-*

surrection, in which, by the omnipotent power of Christ, we are called to rise from the death of our sins. By this *calling* are signified, the *misery* of man, who being far off from God, needs to be recalled from his wandering; the *means* which God uses for his conversion, viz., the word of the gospel preached, than which nothing is more adapted to convert a rational creature; and the great *dignity* to which the sons of God are called; since dignities or honours are usually bestowed through calling. The necessity of this calling is abundantly proved from the corrupt and wretched state of man before it takes place; for men before their calling are blind, dead in sin, the servants of corruption, and the slaves of Satan.

There is a two-fold *calling;* one *external,* the other *internal.* The external takes place through the ministry of the word and sacraments, which are outward means; the internal is effected by the word and Spirit of God, acting upon the understandings and wills of men, as we shall see hereafter; the former very often takes place without the latter, but the latter always supposes the former. Of both callings God is the author, who "stands at the door and knocks," inviting men to his kingdom; of both, the preached word is the instrument, and the glory of God the end; the objects of both are men miserable and sinful, all equally dead in sin, and helpless in every thing that is good. But they differ in various particulars. In *outward* calling, God only commands what is man's duty; in *inward* calling he works or produces what he commands. Outward calling takes place only through the word; inward calling by the Spirit accompanying the word. The former is common to many, to all, indeed, who hear the gospel; the latter belongs to a few, to the elect only; whence it is said to be a "calling according to God's purpose." "Whom he did predestinate, them he also called," (Rom. viii. 29, 30.) This latter is always effectual, "Every one that hath heard and learned of the Father cometh unto me;" says Christ, (John vi. 45,) while the former, if it be separated from inward calling, is ineffectual to salvation, although it has its uses.

Calling may be further distinguished into *ordinary* and *extraordinary;* the one is that which God uses in the ordinary dispensation of his grace through the ministry of men; the latter is out of the common course, and respects those persons, whom Christ immediately called; in this way also Paul was called.

CHAPTER II.

OF OUTWARD CALLING.

The word *Gospel* has several significations among sacred and profane writers. It signifies any joyful or favourable news, also the *reward* to be given for that news, as Cicero exclaims, *O three delightful epistles, for which I know not what rewards* (εὐαγγέλια) *I shall give.* It also means a sacrifice offered for any joyful event, as Isocrates says, εὐαγγέλια τεθύκαμεν. In the scriptures it signifies the glad tidings of the Messiah's coming, and the proclamation of grace made by the incarnate Saviour himself, or by his apostles; also the evangelical history of his life, death, and resurrection. Now when we say that we are *called* by the preaching of the gospel, we mean by the word *gospel* in this case, the doctrine of God's grace and mercy towards mankind, founded on Jesus Christ. This gospel not only commenced with the birth of Christ, but it was also proclaimed from the beginning of the world, after the fall of Adam; when God said that "the seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent," (Gen. iii. 15.) By the preaching of this gospel men have been and still are called, not only Jews, but also Gentiles, according to numberless divine oracles, in which the calling of the latter was predicted and promised. Under the Old Testament, indeed, God gave the written law only to the descendants of Jacob, suffering other nations to walk in their own ways, (Psalm cxlvii. 19, 20; Acts xiv. 16.) But now the distinction between nations has been done away, and "the sound of the apostles has gone out into all the earth," (Rom. x. 18; Col. i. 23.)

This gospel is not, indeed, proclaimed to all people, for there are many who have never heard any thing of the gospel, and who still remain in the darkness of ignorance. Nor has God the same purpose towards all those who are outwardly called, since some are non-elect, others elect: God calls the latter, in order to make them partakers of salvation, but he has not the same design in reference to the former, who he knows will never partake of salvation. For if it were the divine intention to save all that are called, God would then fail in his purpose, which is

inconsistent with every idea of his character. It is not strange that God should suffer the gospel to be proclaimed to the non-elect, on whom it does not please him to bestow faith; since it is not strange, that God is pleased to allow the one to be mixed with the other: the Creator of men has a right to prescribe to them their rule of duty, and it is a great kindness of God towards his creatures, to point out to them the way of salvation. If indeed God had chosen that the elect should live apart from the non-elect, there would be cause to wonder that the gospel should be preached to the latter, seeing that the gospel contains promises of a salvation which they are never to possess; but as the case really is, it ought to seem no more strange, than that God should be pleased to send rain upon rocks and barren places, as well as upon fields sown with grain, upon meadows, and gardens, although we know that rain is wholly useless in the former places; for every one knows that this is done, because God has not thought fit to alter the laws of nature, which he has wisely ordained; and the same reasoning applies to the outward calling of those persons who will not finally be saved.

But should any further reason be sought, why God appoints the gospel to be proclaimed to the non-elect, we answer that this is done in order to restrain their corruption, and prevent it from breaking out beyond all due bounds; at least this is the case with *some* of them, towards whom the preaching of the gospel answers the same end as the various chastisements by which God bridles the wickedness of the ungodly; and with others of them, the preaching of the word reveals or detects the depravity of their hearts, (Luke ii. 35.) Now although God does not at all intend the salvation of the non-elect, yet he deals with the greatest truth and seriousness when he calls them, nor can any charge of mockery or deceit be brought against him. *All that are called by the gospel*, says the Synod of Dort, *are seriously called, for God seriously and truly shews in his word what is acceptable to him, and also seriously promises rest for their souls, and eternal life, to all that come to him by faith.* Those who reject the word are very severely reproved in scripture, and will be punished for that rejection, (Isaiah i. 2, 3; lxv. 2, 3; Matt. xi. 16; John v. 40; Proverbs i. 24—26); whereas those who obey the divine calling and receive the word, are commended, and will be rewarded. (John xiv. 21; Acts xvii. 11.)

CHAPTER III.

OF INWARD CALLING.

Inward calling also takes place through the preaching of the gospel, but accompanied by the inward grace of the Holy Spirit; hence it is termed "calling according to the divine purpose," (Rom. viii. 28,) also *regeneration*, *sanctification*, and *conversion*. It is termed *calling*, for reasons already alleged; it is termed *regeneration*, to denote the entire inability of man to what is good; to denote the great change which takes place in him, so great that he seems to be born anew; and also to intimate the almighty power of divine grace: it is termed *sanctification*, because man thereby is made holy: and *conversion*, because he is then turned from the creature unto God. *Calling* and *regeneration* denote the mere acts of God, and not our own; *sanctification* and *conversion* denote the acts of God, and our own also, as stirred up within us by the grace of God. These terms, however, are frequently distinguished in this manner; *effectual calling* is the giving of faith and repentance, and thus it precedes both; *regeneration* sometimes includes effectual calling, and the renovation of corrupt nature; at other times, it is strictly taken for the latter only; *sanctification* is the continuance or carrying on of regeneration; *conversion* sometimes means the same as regeneration, sometimes as repentance; but very generally all these terms are used indiscriminately.

But that the subject of *inward* or *effectual calling*, and of the mode in which the grace of God acts upon men, may be rightly understood, we shall explain our meaning in several propositions, only premising, what we have before observed, that man is of his own nature utterly impotent in reference to all spiritual good, being dead in sin, and utterly incapable of doing any thing that can please God; that he cannot even do the least thing which may influence or dispose God to bestow grace upon him, nor in any way dispose or make himself meet to receive divine grace, any more than a dead man can dispose himself to receive life, or a blind man

sight. This being premised, we assert *first*, that those whom God pleases to convert by his grace, he generally disposes secretly and gradually to conversion, by means partly external, partly internal. He *externally* disposes them through the preaching of the word, either the law or the gospel; sometimes by temporal blessings; sometimes by chastisements and afflictions. He disposes them *internally*, when he terrifies their conscience with a sense of his displeasure, shows to them the heinousness of sin, implants in them a desire of conversion and amendment, and sets before them holiness in its most attractive forms. *Secondly*, this grace, which we may call *disposing* grace, is also given to many who are not elect. Hence they are said to be "enlightened," and "to have tasted the heavenly gifts," &c. (Heb. vi. 4.) *Thirdly*, what may be called *sufficient* grace, i. e. which is sufficient for conversion, is not given to all; there are vast numbers to whom there is "not given a heart to understand, nor eyes to see," to whom "it is not given to know the divine mysteries," (Matt. xi. 27; xiii. 11.) God "hath mercy on whom he will have mercy," (Rom. ix. 18.) This grace is granted to the elect only, to whom "it is given to believe," and who are "drawn by the Father." "Whom he did *predestinate*, them he also *called*." *Fourthly*, the operation of divine grace in our conversion is partly known, and partly unknown; it works by wonderful and indescribable methods, which we are not permitted thoroughly to understand and observe.—*Fifthly*, God converts men through the preaching of his word, which is a necessary instrument, since God always acts in a manner that is suited to a rational creature, and according to Paul, "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God," (Rom. x. 17.) The word is therefore called "the seed of regeneration," (1 Pet. i. 23.) *Sixthly*, although God calls men by his word, the immediate operation of the Holy Spirit is necessary to give it effect. This is proved from those passages of scripture in which David prays that his "eyes may be opened to see wondrous things out of God's law;" and Christ is said to have "opened the understandings of his disciples, that they might understand the scripture;" and the Lord to have "opened the heart of Lydia, that she attended unto the things which were spoken by Paul, (Psalm cxix. 18; Luke xxiv. 45; Acts xvi. 14;) also from 1 Cor. iv. 6, 7, where the apostle distinguishes the influence of man in "planting and water-

ing" by the word, from the secret influence of "God giving the increase." Also, from those passages, in which the utter inability of man is set forth, as when he is called *blind and dead;* for as it is not enough, in order that the blind may see, to set light before him, but there is also required the restoration of the organ or power of sight; so, for the spiritual sight of faith, the revelation of doctrine in the word is not sufficient, unless the faculty within be restored and disposed to receive the object. Also, from that passage in which God is said to employ in our conversion "the exceeding greatness of his power, according to the working of his mighty power;" (Eph. i. 19,) which expressions would be frigid and unmeaning, if God in converting men merely proposed the gospel plainly to them with certain attendant circumstances. The same point is proved from this fact—that so far is the word, when proposed to the corrupt heart, from being able to influence it, or deliver it from its prejudices, that on the contrary, this very word serves to confirm and increase these prejudices; for "the preaching of the cross (to the natural man) is a stumbling-block and foolishness," (1 Cor. i. 23.)

The operation of the Holy Spirit, although indescribable, is very remote from *enthusiasm.* In enthusiasm the objects which are impressed on the mind, do not come from without, but are inwardly suggested by the mind itself. But in the Spirit's operations the object is always understood to make its approach from without, and to be derived from the word. Enthusiasm takes place by sudden motions, which go before reason itself, and often exclude it altogether; the operation of the Spirit draws along with it the cordial consent of the will. Once more, enthusiasm affects the mind, while the will oftens remains unchanged; and hence it is found even in the ungodly; whereas the operations of divine grace necessarily include a change of the heart. Although we cannot explain the operation of grace, yet we may make a few remarks upon it. We believe, then, that this divine work exercises an immediate influence on the body and on the soul, in order that the passions may not pervert our reason and judgment. It also prevents such motions from being excited within the brain, as would excite evil thoughts in the mind. It calls off the mind from all those ideas and thoughts which would divert it from holiness. It prevents those objects from fastening on the mind, which have a tendency to corrupt

it. It induces such attention, during the reading or hearing of the word, as prevents the mind from forming a hasty or wrong judgment. It very often suggests and brings to remembrance the truths which we have heard or read. It fills the mind with great delight, either when we read the word, or are desirous of reducing it to practice. Lastly, it increases this sacred pleasure more and more, so as to overcome the pleasures of sin.

In the first stage of our calling, when man is rendered capable of believing, he is merely passive, and does not act at all, as is proved by those passages of scripture which describe him to be *blind* and *dead*, and as being *created*, *born again*, *raised from the dead*. The Spirit, however, does not act upon us as upon stocks and stones, since it never acts without the word, nor has its operation any other design, than to give effect to the word and impress it upon the mind. It not only acts on the understanding, but also on the will and affections; and it must necessarily so act, because we find in general, that every man judges according as he is affected, whence it follows that the Spirit acts on the will and affections, that we may be able to attend to the truths proposed to us. Converting grace may be said to act *physically* and *morally*; it acts *morally*, when by means of the word it teaches, inclines, and persuades: it acts *physically*, by infusing into the soul a divine delight, and by so acting on the body as to restrain the passions or affections.

So powerful is the operation of the Spirit, that it cannot be overcome by man; flesh and blood does indeed for a long time resist, but is finally vanquished by grace, for who could successfully resist the power which brought the world out of nothing, and raises the dead from the tomb? Now this point is established by two arguments: *first*, if grace so operated, that it was in man's power either to use it, or resist it, man would owe more to himself, and to his own will, than to God; he would then "make himself to differ from others," which Paul denies to be the case. (1 Cor. iv. 7.) And thus he would have "whereof to glory;" nay, the very foreknowledge of God would be rendered doubtful and uncertain. The other argument is derived from John vi. 44, 45, where, after Christ had said, "No man can come to me, except the Father draw him," he adds, "every one that hath heard and learned of the Father, cometh to me;" for by these two verses we are taught the *ne-*

cessity, and the invincible *efficacy* of grace. For it always produces the effects which it is designed to produce; if it is only given to stir up some good motions, and to implant the desire of a new life, it effects this purpose; if it is given to work a full and complete conversion, this also it effectually accomplishes.

But although the operation of the Spirit is most powerful, yet it is most winning and delightful, and in no way does violence to our natural liberty; for it operates by the illumination of the understanding, and by the persuasion of the will. We are drawn, but we are instructed, we are created, but we are illuminated; the gospel which converts, is called "the arm of the Lord," but it is compared to honey; it is called "the power of God," but it is compared to milk; it is the sceptre of his strength, but also of his grace. *It is to be feared*, says Prosper, *lest we should seem to destroy free agency, by saying, that every thing by which God is propitiated is to be referred to him, as coming from him! This by no means follows; for in the operation of the Spirit of God, the will is assisted, not destroyed: this is the effect of grace, that the will, corrupted by sin, deluded by vanities, surrounded by temptations, entangled in difficulties, does not remain in all this weakness and infirmity, but recovers its strength, being healed by the power of the merciful Physician, and rejoices that it is instructed without first asking, and sought without first seeking.*

With regard to the sanctification of *infants*, we may observe, that it cannot be denied that elect infants are sanctified; for were it not so, they could not, when they died, seeing they were impure, enter the kingdom of heaven. Now they are not sanctified through the word, for they are not capable of hearing it; but by the Spirit, who is the only author of their sanctification. Although the mode in which the Spirit thus operates is indescribable, yet the fact cannot be denied. It is probable that this operation consists in breaking off a certain moral union or sympathy, which the soul immediately and naturally acquires with the corrupt body; and, since this moral union depends upon certain corporeal motions of the spirits impressed by the parents, at which motions certain affections arise in the soul, it is probable that the Holy Spirit breaks off this union; on the one hand by altering the motions of the spirits, either by suspending or restraining them, and on the other hand, by stirring up other motions in the soul.

CHAPTER IV.

OF FAITH.

The first act of inward calling, and the first motion of the new man, is *faith*, the necessity of which is so great, that it is celebrated in scripture as the bond of our union with Christ, the condition of the covenant of grace, the fruit of election, the beginning of sanctification, and the infallible means of salvation. To speak of it accurately, we must examine into the following particulars. In how many senses this word is taken, what are the objects of saving faith, what are its acts in reference to these objects, who is the author of faith, who is the subject, what is the difference between a temporary faith, and the faith of the elect, and what are the opposites of faith.

First, we must ascertain in how many ways the word *faith* is taken; sometimes it is used for that *fidelity* which we observe to others, by which that which is promised and agreed upon is performed, and in this sense it is attributed to God, (Rom. iii. 3,) sometimes for the evangelical doctrine which is the object of faith, (Gal. i. 23; iii. 25,) sometimes for an outward profession of faith, as Gal. vi. 10, "the household of faith;" sometimes for the assent of the mind, in which sense it is here to be taken. But even in this sense we must discriminate between the following descriptions of faith: *first*, there is a faith which consists in a bare assent to revealed truth, which even devils may have, (James ii. 19,) and which is called *historical* faith, not only as believing the histories contained in scripture, but as believing them merely as histories, without being influenced by them to true holiness. Then there is the faith which consists in an assent to some particular promise concerning a miraculous event, to be accomplished either by us, or in us; and this is called the faith of miracles; which was of two kinds, one, which was required in those by whom God was pleased to work miracles; of which Christ speaks, saying, "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence,"

&c., (Matt. xvii. 20;) the other, required in those for whom or for whose benefit miracles were to be wrought, for which end Christ was accustomed to put the question to those who came to be healed, *Do you believe?* Again, there is a faith, which besides an assent to revealed things, has some experience of the truth, and is connected with some degree of joy, but "has no root," and finally ceases to exist when "persecutions arise;" this is the faith of *temporary* professors. *Lastly*, there is *justifying* and *saving* faith, of which we are now to treat, only premising, that this faith possesses in it all that is good in historical and temporary faith, to which is sometimes added the faith of miracles. But the latter may be possessed without justifying faith, as by Judas, and others alluded to in Matt. vii. 22, while in vast numbers of believers there has been, and will be, justifying faith without the faith of miracles; though in the infancy of Christianity these two were often united.

And now what is the *object* of saving faith? We may observe generally, that the object of it must be truth, without any falsehood, and this is no other than the Word of God. But we observe also, that there is a twofold object of faith, one *general*, comprising the whole word of God, in its histories, prophecies, doctrines, precepts, promises, and threatenings; the other, special and particular, which is the doctrine of Jesus Christ, and the promises of remission of sin and of salvation in him, as made to this and that individual. Now that the specific object of saving faith is the special promise of mercy in Christ, is proved from several arguments, particularly because, if true faith had not this object, it would not be different from the faith of devils, and therefore could not save; and because also the faith of the saints has always had respect to this special mercy in Christ; thus Paul testifies that he believes that "Christ loved *him*, and gave himself for *him*," (Gal. ii. 20,) and that "*he* obtained mercy," (1 Tim. i. 16.) But this point will appear more fully when we speak of the acts of faith; to which we will now advert, only first observing, that the idea of faith includes *knowledge*, as is evident from the scriptures, where we read, "by *his knowledge* (namely, of Christ) shall my righteous servant justify many." (Isaiah liii. 11.) "This is life eternal, that they might *know* thee, the only true God," &c. (John xvii. 3.) And faith is called "the knowledge of the truth." (1 Tim. ii. 4; 2 Tim. iii. 7.) It is also evident from faith being re-

presented as coming by means of the word; since the word cannot be believed except it be known.

Now there are several acts of faith; the *first* is that by which we assent to the whole word of God, and especially to the promises of the gospel; and are not only persuaded of the truth and excellency of the gospel, but also of its supreme excellency and superiority to all other systems. This assent is most strong and certain, seeing it is founded on the authority and veracity of that God who speaks, and who cannot lie. By this first act of faith we are persuaded that Christ is the true and promised Messiah, the hope of Israel, the consolation of the church, the only name given to men, whereby we can be saved. The *second* act of faith is that by which we are persuaded, not only in general, that Christ is the Saviour, but also that he is the Saviour of all those, who, truly repenting of their sins, seek true righteousness and salvation in him, and take refuge in him alone; and consequently that he is *our* Saviour, if we thus repent, and seek refuge in him. The first act is common to men and devils, the second cannot exist in devils, since they are well assured that there is no salvation reserved for them.

The *third* act of faith is that, by which, actually and truly repenting of our sins past, and feeling our own misery, and inability to deliver ourselves from it, we go, as it were, out of ourselves, and renouncing our own righteousness, hunger and thirst after the righteousness of Christ, and desire to be "found in him, not having our own righteousness, but that which is of the faith of Christ:" (Phil. iii. 9.) And not only so, but acknowledging no other Mediator but Christ, and persuaded that his blood and righteousness are of infinite value, we pray the Father to impute to us the obedience of the Son; we give ourselves up entirely to Christ, and are most intimately united to him, saying, with the church, "I found him whom my soul loveth: I held him, and would not let him go." (Cant. iii. 4.) These are the three direct acts of faith, the last of which is properly the act which we term *justifying*.

The *fourth* act is that, by which, looking back upon ourselves, and beholding in ourselves the conditions which Christ requires of those whose Saviour he is, we conclude that Christ died for us, and that he is ours with all his benefits; such an act of faith was that of Paul, (Gal. ii. 20,) already quoted; and others. (1 Tim.

i. 16. 2 Tim. i. 12.) This act is attended with the greatest consolation, and that peace of conscience arising from the possession of Christ, enabling us, as knowing our fellowship with Christ, and being assured of his love, to rejoice in the Lord, and to challenge all our enemies; to "sit under his shadow with great delight, and to find his fruit sweet to our taste," (Cant. ii. 3).

But a question here arises, whether confidence or assurance is of the essence of faith, or only an effect of it; upon this, divines are not agreed. As for ourselves, we venture an opinion, that by the word *confidence* is meant either the *act* by which we depend and rely on the merits of Christ, cleaving to him as the source of salvation; or a *firm persuasion* of having obtained the pardon of our sins and reconciliation with God; or *spiritual might*, by which we bear up under those evils against which we have to contend during this mortal life; or *tranquillity of conscience.* In the first of these senses *confidence* is of the essence of faith, nor can faith be conceived to exist without such confidence; in the second sense it is not of the essence of faith, if we consider only its *direct* acts, but it is of the essence of faith, if we consider the *reflex* act; or rather it does not so much belong to the essence, as to the perfection of faith; it may be said to be the property of a *strong* and *confirmed*, but not of a *weak* faith. Moreover, that this *confidence* or full *persuasion* is not an essential act of faith, appears from this argument—no one can assure himself that he is reconciled to God, without discovering by reflection that true faith is in him, for he thus reasons, "He who believes in Christ is reconciled, I believe, therefore," &c. Thus this persuasion supposes faith already to exist in the heart; therefore it is not of the essence of faith, which is further confirmed by the circumstance of many pious believers *doubting.* In the third and fourth of the above senses, confidence appears to be the *effect* of faith.

From these positions it is easy to discover the nature of true faith, and to give a definition of it according to the different acts which we have considered as belonging to it. Nor is it a matter of surprise, that divines give such different definitions of it; for some endeavour to describe its entire essence, namely, both that which it possesses in common with the historical belief, and that which peculiarly belongs to it; others, regarding not only its complete essence, but also that which it has a

tendency to produce in believers, describe it as a firm *persuasion* of the pardon of sin; though the fact is, that the believer can continue without this, at least for a time. Others draw their definition of faith from those things, without which true faith, even in its lowest degree, cannot exist at all, as when they define it by a hungering and thirsting after righteousness; some attend only to the direct acts of faith; others to the reflex; others to both. Thus, according to different points of view, it may be differently defined, and there is no occasion to adduce every mode of definition. I shall only make a few observations on that description of faith we read of in Heb. xi. 1, where it is called "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." It is not quite clear what is to be understood by *substance*, and what by *evidence*. The word ὑπόστασις (substance) denotes the *existence* of a thing, also a *base* or *foundation;* also *subsistence* or *firmness*, such as does not yield to the assaults of enemies. When, therefore, the apostle says that "faith is the substance of things hoped for," the meaning may be, that faith not only places the things we hope for before the mind, as if they were present; but is also the prop or support of the soul, leaning on which it fears nothing, and yields to no assault. The word ἐλεγχος (evidence) denotes two things, viz. *certain demonstration*, and *conviction of mind;* and therefore faith is so called, because it fully convinces or assures us of the things which we can neither see with our eyes, nor fully comprehend in our minds.

We proceed to inquire, who is the *author* of faith? The scripture teaches that it is God, not only by its general assertion, that "every good gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights," (James i. 17,) but also by its particular and express declaration, that faith "is the gift of God," (Ephes. ii. 8.) The *means* by which God produces faith, is the word; for "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God," (Rom. x. 17,) which is therefore called "the seed of regeneration," (James i. 18; 1 Peter i. 23.) But we should to no purpose hear the word, unless the Spirit wrought with it, to subdue the passions, dispel the prejudices, and sanctify the heart; as we have already noticed. We need only observe further on this head, that God is not the author of faith in such a manner as to *believe* in us, for it is we that believe, not God; he it is who gives us the power to believe. We observe also that, according to the scrip-

ture, the Spirit both precedes, produces, and also follows faith, as when it is said, "After that ye believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit," (Eph. i. 13.) To understand this apparent contrariety, we must distinguish between the different operations of the Spirit, some of which introduce us into communion with Christ, others follow this communion; the former produce faith, the latter follow it.

We next inquire who are the *subjects* of faith? The reply is, only the elect, hence it is called "the faith of God's elect;" (Titus i. 1,) and it is only given to those, "that are the called according to his purpose," (Rom. viii. 28,) and are "ordained to eternal life," (Acts xiii. 48.) Moreover, the subjects of faith are only those who can make use of their reason; not infants, who are incapable of hearing and meditating upon the word, and of the several acts or operations of faith.

We must also examine, as proposed, into the difference between *temporary* and *true* faith. Now it is not *duration* which *always* distinguishes them; for those who have the former often die in this faith, which yet does not save them, and therefore in regard to such persons, faith cannot be strictly said "to be for a time." The *first* difference consists in their origin; God indeed may be said to produce both; but true faith proceeds from election, and hence it is called "the faith of God's elect;" whereas temporary faith depends upon common grace, which bestows some spiritual blessings even upon the non-elect. The Spirit of *regeneration* and *adoption* is the principle of true faith, but the spirit of *illumination* is the author of temporary faith. The *second* difference is derived from the motives which influence temporary and true believers in their respective beliefs. The latter embrace the gospel principally as a system that is *good* and *honourable* in itself, though at the same time they embrace it as a system that is *agreeable* and *useful;* hence, when they cannot retain the gospel without renouncing all their worldly interests and pleasures, they prefer doing this to denying the gospel and casting off the profession of religion. But the former embrace the gospel principally as a system that is *useful* and *agreeable*, and therefore, if they cannot profess true religion without renouncing their worldly interests, they choose to renounce the former, rather than the latter. The *third* difference is derived from the root or foundation of faith; the faith that is temporary "has no root," (Matt. xiii. 21,)

it is seated in the outward surface of the soul, i. e. in the understanding only; whereas true faith is seated in the heart; hence the faithful are said to be "rooted in Christ," and "grounded in the faith," (Col. i. 23; ii. 7.) The *fourth* difference is seen in this, viz. that temporary faith is not connected with the sanctification of the heart, and therefore, if at any time its possessors perform some outwardly good actions, and appear to amend their lives, and "escape the pollutions of the world," yet whenever the allurements of the world and the flesh, or persecutions arise, they return to their former impurity. But true faith "worketh by love;" and while it sets before us the exceeding great love of God and Christ, it inspires us with love towards them in return, and imprints the characters of holiness so deeply upon the soul, that it considers nothing to be more excellent than an entire dedication to God; and at the same time so deeply engraves on the heart the promises of eternal happiness, that the believer is ready to endure every thing for such happiness; hence those who have this faith are said to "bring forth fruit," (Matt. xiii. 8—23.) In temporary faith there arises joy, partly from the novelty and uncommonness of the things revealed, partly from the vain persuasion that the blessings offered in the gospel belong to it; but in true faith there is far nobler and more solid joy, springing from real love to the most precious truths, and from the sure expectation of glory.

With regard to the *opposites* of faith, which is the last point of consideration, they are, *doubt*, which is a withholding of assent, or hesitation about divine things, and has for its object either the whole Christian religion, or some particular doctrine;—*unbelief*, when a man refuses to assent to divine truth;—*infidelity*, when a man does not believe the truth, because it is not revealed to him—and finally, *mistrust*. But here we may also take occasion to observe, that true faith has different degrees; for there is *strong* faith, and *weak* faith. Weak faith is that which knows only the elements of piety, as was the case with the Hebrew converts; (Heb. vi. 1,) that which has not yet attained to the knowledge of some important doctrine: thus those who were not fully instructed in the nature of Christian liberty, are called "weak in the faith;" (Rom. xiv. 1; xv. 1; 1 Cor. viii. 9, 10,)—that which very imperfectly assents to those things which God hath revealed to us; such was the faith of Martha; (John xi. 23, 24.)—that which has a conflict with many doubts, as

the faith of the father of the demoniac, (Mark ix. 24.)—that which is formed rashly, without any foundation, and is therefore unstable. But strong faith belongs to those who have made great progress in the knowledge of the gospel, who firmly assent to evangelical truths, and devotedly adhere to Christ.

CHAPTER V.

OF THE PERSEVERANCE OF FAITH.

True faith always perseveres, and is never lost. This is proved by the following arguments. We must reason in the same way concerning faith, as concerning election, since the former is the effect of the latter. Now the decree of election is unchangeable, as we have before proved; therefore faith is unchangeable. Again: if faith could be lost, then the covenant of grace, which God promises to perform towards us, could also be abolished with regard to those who ceased to believe; but the covenant of grace also is unchangeable, and can never be revoked, as we well know; for in this way it is distinguished from the covenant of works, which was broken and made of none effect. "I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me," (Jer. xxxii. 40.) "The mountains shall depart, and the hills shall be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord," (Isaiah liv. 10.) Again: if faith could be lost, the union of the faithful with Christ could be dissolved; whereas that union is so firm that nothing can separate them from him, (Rom. viii. 38, 39.) And Christ himself thus speaks, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life: and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand," i. e. neither Satan, nor the world, nor the flesh, the three enemies of all Christ's people. (John

x. 27, 28.) Moreover, if faith could be lost, it would be possible that "he that believeth on the Son, should *not* have eternal life," contrary to Christ's own declaration, (John iii. 36,) and elsewhere; and that they should *not* be "glorified" whom God hath "called," contrary to Paul's assertion. (Rom. viii. 30.) Further: they who believe are "sealed by the Holy Spirit unto the day of redemption," (Eph. i. 13, 14; iv. 30.) but those who are thus sealed surely cannot perish. Lastly, faith is the effect of Christ's death and intercession; but both these are of infinite value, and Christ's intercession is continual.

To these arguments we might add those passages of scripture, in which our spiritual life is called "incorruptible seed," (1 Peter i. 23.)—"a well of water springing up into everlasting life," (John iv. 14.) and particularly that memorable passage in 1 John iii. 9, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." In this passage let it be observed, that the seed of the new birth is said to "remain or abide in him," and because it thus abides, the believer cannot sin, (i. e. habitually and wilfully.) Nor must we imagine that this seed can be cast out, by men permitting the seed of the devil to be cast into their hearts, and to bring forth the fruit of sin; for it is implied that this seed so occupies the soul, that there is no place left for the seed of the devil—"that wicked one toucheth him not," (1 John v. 18.) The same truth is established from 1 John ii. 19. "They went out from us, but they were not of us: (i. e. they were not believers) for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not of us."

But although we maintain that true faith cannot be lost, yet we allow that it is not always in exercise: hence it happens that the faithful sometimes fall into very great sins, as David, Solomon, Peter, and others, at which time they would justly deserve to be excluded from the kingdom of heaven, and to be condemned to eternal punishment, did not God take pity on them, and restore them to holiness. Still in such persons faith does not fail; nor is it strange to assert that faith subsists along with grievous sins, since it is admitted that contraries or opposites can unite in the same subject; in this manner, although flesh and blood are contrary to each

other, yet they cannot entirely expel each other, while we live in this mortal state. The case is the same with faith in believers, when they fall into any great sins, as it is with the soul in the body, while in a state of insensibility: the soul is not lost, neither is faith; or as it is with the seed which lies hid in the earth during the winter's cold. Let us close this chapter with the words of Fulgentius. *Grace prevents the wicked, that he may become righteous, follows after the righteous, that he may not become unrighteous; it prevents the blind, to give him the light which he does not possess, it then follows after him when seeing, in order to preserve the gift it has bestowed. It prevents the fallen that he may rise, it follows after the risen, that he may not fall again; it prevents sinful man by giving him a good will, it follows after him, having a good will, by working in him the power of doing what is good.*

CHAPTER VI.

OF THE ASSURANCE OF FAITH.

THE question here is, whether a man can be sure of his faith, and consequently of his salvation? We cannot doubt of the affirmative, when we read in scripture, "I know whom I have believed," (2 Tim. i. 12.) And "he that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself," (1 John v. 10.) Besides, whoever is sure that he has the Spirit of God dwelling in him, can be sure of his faith, since where the Holy Spirit is, there is faith; now the faithful may certainly know that they have the former privilege, (1 John iii. 24.) for "the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits, that we are the children of God," (Rom. viii. 16.) And if no one could be sure of his faith, it would be in vain to prescribe examination for that purpose, as Paul does, (2 Cor. xiii. 5.) Besides, we may reason in the same way concerning the *spiritual*, as concerning the *natural* life; now in the latter, the soul not only understands, but is also conscious to

itself of its own operations, and knows that it does understand; so in the spiritual life the soul has this peculiar property, that it not only puts forth the acts of faith and charity, but by a reflex view of itself is conscious of so doing; hence we have observed, that there are *reflex* as well as *direct* acts of faith. The same arguments which prove that the faithful man can be sure of his faith, prove also that he can be sure of his salvation.

But we must here put in a few cautions. *First*, a man must not hastily conclude that he has faith, without a careful examination; for the ungrounded presumption of a carnal spirit may counterfeit the assurance of faith. Therefore we must particularly regard the effects of a true faith; which we shall ascertain that we possess, if we feel our own corruption, and are out of conceit with ourselves—if we hate sin, grieve at the commission of it, avoid the occasions of it, and aim at sanctification—if our faith be such as stirs up within us the love of Christ, and the desire of enjoying him—if we not only embrace Christ as our priest who hath expiated our sins, but also submit to his dominion as our king; in other words, if we regard him not only as our surety, but also as our head—if we follow him, not only triumphing, but also suffering—if we feel peace and joy unspeakable—if we delight in reading, meditation on the word, and prayer. From all these effects we shall be able to ascertain real faith, though we must observe, that the above marks or signs are not always so clearly discerned by us, which however must not cause us to despair, merely if our pursuit of holiness be relaxed, and our joy disturbed by the influence of doubts and fears.

We observe again, that this assurance is not always the same, but different, according as faith is sometimes weak and infirm, at other times, strong and lively; somtimes beset with temptations and struggles, at other times free from them. For although this assurance is necessary to the comfort of the believer, it is not absolutely required to constitute the reality of faith as if every moment we were to be certain of faith and salvation; a mother does not always feel the motion of the child which she bears, nor is the believer always sensible of the motions of the new man within him. Neither is this assurance incompatible with fear; hence we are enjoined to "work out our own salvation with fear and trembling;" (Phil. ii. 12.) but we must distinguish between *servile* fear, such as is in slaves, who only dread

punishment, and *filial* fear, which consists in humility, in a steady resolution of cleaving to God, and a continual care to abstain from sin; the first of these fears is inconsistent with assurance, the second is not so, for it takes away carnal security, but not the real confidence of believers. Those who are certain of salvation are most afraid of sin; which they hate, as provoking the divine anger; they stand in awe of God, and carefully watch, lest they lose aught of his grace, and lest they should have "received it in vain."

Moreover, the believer ought not to be afraid, as long as he perceives that he is walking in that path which leads to salvation; and this assurance is connected with the pursuit of holiness, and therefore not only the impenitent sinner should not be sure of salvation, but not even the believer himself, when he is sensible of having fallen into very great sin, and not yet amended his life. It may also be remarked, that the assurance which a believer should have concerning his faith and salvation, is not of the same nature as the assurance which we have of the doctrines contained in the word of God; for the latter is absolutely necessary to the essence of faith, but not the former; without the one the believer may be saved, provided he be devoted to holiness; but without the other he cannot be saved at all.

Finally, the doubts which spring up within us concerning our salvation, proceed for the most part from an evil principle; for we doubt of salvation, either for want of faith in God's promises, like unbelievers, who doubt whether there is a God, or a heaven; or from an unreasonable apprehension that God will not have mercy upon us; as for instance, when the believer, following after holiness with all his might, yet doubts his salvation, because he cannot reach the perfection he desires, or because he is afflicted. Or else this doubt arises from a man's not being able to discover in himself the motions on which to found his assurance; and to disperse and remedy these unbelieving doubts, we must trace them up directly to their cause and origin.

CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY.

BOOK THE EIGHTH.

OF JUSTIFICATION AND SANCTIFICATION.

CHAPTER I.

OF JUSTIFICATION IN GENERAL.

"Whom God called, them he also justified," (Rom. viii. 30); having therefore treated of *calling*, we must now treat of *justification*, which is, according to the great Luther, *the article by which a church stands or falls.* The word *justification* (to justify) answers to the Greek δικαιουν, and to the Hebrew הצדיק. But in the sacred writings it does not always admit the same sense as the word δικαιουν, which in profane authors signifies to *punish* any one for an injury done by him to another. The word *justify* is in general, indeed almost always, taken in a forensic sense—to acquit any one in judgment, to account and to declare him to be righteous. Take the following passages — "I will not justify the wicked"—"He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, are both an abomination to the Lord"—"Wo unto them which justify the wicked for reward"—"By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy

words thou shalt be condemned," (Exod. xxiii. 7; Prov. xvii. 15; Isaiah v. 23; Matt. xii. 37.) Whenever, indeed, the scripture professedly speaks of the justification of man before God, as in the epistles to the Romans and to the Galatians, the term is always used in a forensic sense, and never for *sanctification*. Thus we read in Job ix. 2, 20. "How should man be just with God? if I justify myself, my own mouth shall condemn me." And in Psalm cxliii. 2. "Enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord; for in thy sight shall no man living be justified." In Rom. iii. 19, 20. "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, &c. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight." And in Rom. iv. 7, 8, to "justify" a sinner Paul explains by "remitting or forgiving sin," by "not imputing it," and by "covering it." And in Rom. v. 9, 10, justification and reconciliation with God by Christ's death are made synonymous. In Rom. vi. 1, the apostle introduces this alleged objection against the doctrine of justification, "shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?" Now if by justification he meant sanctification, or the *infusion* of righteousness, this objection would have been ridiculous. In Rom. viii. 33, 34, justification is opposed to *condemnation* and *accusation*, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth;—who is he that condemneth?" See also Gal. ii. 16. All this is confirmed by the sacred writers constantly using the terms of a judicial process, since they represent the accusing law, the guilty party, the handwriting or bond against them, divine justice demanding punishment, the advocate pleading our cause, satisfaction for sin and righteousness imputed, the throne of grace before which we are acquitted, and the judge who acquits us. All this leads to the conclusion, that justification ought to be understood as in the case of a guilty person, who deserves condemnation, and yet is justified or acquitted.

In other passages of scripture, where the subject of justification is not handled, we do not deny that the term may be used in a different sense from the above. Thus it is said, "They that *justify* many (the word in the original) i. e. turn many to righteousness, shall shine," &c. (Dan. xii. 3); and "he that is dead is *justified* (δεδικαίωται,) i. e. *freed* from sin," (Rom. vi. 7). We may here observe these three things—first, that Paul sometimes de-

scribes the benefits of justification and sanctification under the general term *washing;* thus 1 Cor. vi. 11. "Ye are washed, ye are sanctified, ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." For there are two things in sin to be washed away, its *guilt* and its *stain*, which is done by Christ and the Spirit, the former having merited both benefits, the latter sanctifying, and giving also the sense of justification; unless we had rather consider the apostle as ascribing justification to the "name" of Christ, and sanctification to the "Spirit." Secondly, that in the Epistle to the Hebrews the writer does not use the word *justification*, but the words *sanctification*, *consecration*, *purification*, seeing that all his allusions are to the sacrifices of the old dispensation, which were said to *sanctify*, to *consecrate*, and to *purify*. Thirdly, that Peter and John in their writings have not used the word justification, but other words and expressions conveying the very same meaning.

Now as man may be considered under three characters, either as *innocent* and *upright;* or as a *sinner*, but penitent and believing; or as *regenerate*, and following after holiness, so we may view a three-fold justification, corresponding with their characters. It is the justification of man as a *sinner*, of which we are now particularly to speak; but previously we may say a word or two about the justification of man, as innocent and upright. Now we say that, if the first man had persevered in innocence, he would have been justified by the fulfilment of the natural law which God had engraven on his heart, and of other commandments which God might have enjoined on him; in short, by perfectly loving God and his neighbour. If he had done this, he would have been pronounced righteous, and would have acquired a right to eternal glory, not indeed as if he had properly merited it, for the creature can merit nothing from the Creator, but according to the free promise and covenant of God. We must however observe, that in this case, we cannot use the word *justification* with much accuracy, for justification does not properly take place where there is no guilt or no accusation. The manner, therefore, in which God would have justified innocent man, would have been simply a *declaration* of man's holiness and righteousness; justification in this sense may be defined *the act of God as a judge, by which he bestows on man perfectly holy, eternal life and glory;* thus the proper *condition*

required of innocent man in this case, would have been *perfect holiness*, and the foundation of his acceptance the meritorious worthiness of good works, although, as we have said, he could not, strictly speaking, have merited any thing at the hands of his Maker.

CHAPTER II.

OF THE JUSTIFICATION OF A SINNER.

We define this to be a *judicial act on the part of God, as the supreme and merciful Governor, whereby he forgives the sins of those who repent, and gives them a title to eternal life, on account of the satisfaction and obedience of Jesus Christ imputed to them, and apprehended by faith.* We will now proceed to explain and enlarge upon this definition. That justification is a *judicial* act, is proved from what we have already said of the word being used in a forensic sense. It is the act of *God*, and of God only; for God alone can forgive sins, he alone searcheth the heart, he alone can give a right and title to life eternal, and deliver from eternal punishment; he is the "one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy," (James iv. 12.) It is true, forgiveness of sins is sometimes attributed to *pastors*, but only because they declare or pronounce the sentence of the heavenly Judge; and sometimes to the *sacraments*, but merely as the seals of the remission which God bestows. Moreover, justification is the act of God as the supreme Governor, not merely as the injured party, nor as the Lawgiver, but as the *Judge*, who is to preserve inviolate his own laws, and who alone has power to dispense with the rigorous exaction of them. And it is the act of God as a *merciful* Judge, because the subjects of it are miserable sinners, such as are all men by nature, under the curse of the law, whom therefore God could punish as a Judge, but whom he saves as an appeased Judge and merciful Father. We must notice also the two parts of which justification consists, viz., the remission of sins, and the

right or title to eternal life; these two the scripture joins together, "Christ was made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law," that is, from the curse of it, "that we might receive the adoption of sons," i. e. the right to life, which flows from adoption. So again, Paul declares that "by faith we receive remission of sins, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified," i. e. a right or title to eternal life, (Acts xxvi. 18.) These two benefits are joined together; for although they could be separated in the nature of things, so that a sinner might obtain remission of sins, and yet not be crowned with eternal glory, yet are they inseparably connected together in the covenant of grace.

The first of these benefits is set forth under different forms of expression—such as *remission*, sins being sometimes represented as *debts*—*pardon*, alluding to the pardon which a judge grants to a criminal—*cleansing*, sin being often compared to *filth*, in which also there is an allusion to the blood of a propitiatory sacrifice—*blotting out*, which expression gives us the idea of a book in which divine justice notes down all our sins in order to punish them. It is further set forth by *covering sin*, God being regarded as hiding our sins under the veil of his mercy, so that his justice cannot behold them; also by *non-imputation*, alluding to the account books of merchants or traders. Also by *reconciliation*, denoting previous enmity; *deliverance*, denoting previous bondage; *making white*, (Isaiah l. 18,) an allusion, if we may believe some persons, to what happened in the case of the *scape-goat*, who was sent away into the wilderness with a rope of red colour, which, during his journey, miraculously became *white*, if God pardoned the sins of the people; but if not, remained *red*. The other benefit is also expressed by various terms, and particularly by that of *adoption*, of which we shall treat presently.

The foundation of both these benefits is not the *inherent righteousness*, or *good works* of sinners themselves: for our justification, according to David and Paul, is without works, (Psalm cxliii. 2; Rom. iii. 20, 28; iv. 6; Gal. ii. 16;) not merely works done before grace, which are nothing but sins, but works done even after grace received. If any man had ever been justified by works, surely it would have been David, or Abraham; but they were not so justified. Besides, if the foundation of this benefit were our own righteousness or good works, the two covenants would be confounded; whereas they are

diametrically opposed to each other; nor can imperfect righteousness, such as is defiled with many stains, constitute any such foundation. Now such is the character of all our righteousness, which is compared to "filthy rags," (Isaiah lxiv. 6.) *If you lean upon it*, says even one of the Popes, Adrian VI. *it is a mere reed, which will break, and also pierce through the hand of him that thus leans upon it.* Nor can such a righteousness deserve the remission of sins, since the forgiven sinner receives the very contrary to what he has truly deserved.

And here we cannot avoid citing the excellent words of Calvin, *It is an easy thing*, he says, *to trifle in the schools of human divinity about the sufficiency of works for the justification of men; but when we come into the presence of God, all such conceits must vanish away, because there the question assumes a serious aspect, and there is no sportive strife of vain words. If then we wish to seek after true righteousness to any purpose, we must direct our whole attention to this single question, How we can answer our heavenly Judge, when he shall call us to account. Let us place before our eyes that Judge, not such a one as our own understandings choose to imagine, but such a one as is set before us in the scripture; one, by whose brightness the stars are darkened, by whose strength the mountains melt away, by whose wisdom "the wise are taken in their own craftiness," before whose purity all things appear unclean, whose justice cannot be endured even by angels, who cannot "clear the guilty," whose indignation when once lighted up, burns even to the lowest hell, let such an one, I say, sit upon his throne to examine the deeds of mortals, and who can stand upright before him, "who can dwell with devouring fire, who can lie down in everlasting burnings"* (of God's displeasure)? *It is indeed an easy thing, as long as we continue to compare ourselves with men, for any man to think that he possesses a goodness, which another man cannot despise; but when we raise our thoughts to God, all this confidence immediately falls to the ground, and vanishes away, and our souls stand affected towards God in some such way as our bodies towards the visible heaven; for the eye, as long as it confines itself to the gaze of objects beneath and around it, receives many proofs of its own quick-sightedness; but when it is fixed upon the sun, being dazzled and overpowered by its intolerable splendour, it is sensible of no less weakness from the contemplation of that luminary, than it was of*

strength from the contemplation of the inferior creatures. (Institutes b. iii. c. 12.)

Therefore the foundation and the meritorious cause of our justification is some other righteousness than our own, even the righteousness of Christ, imputed to us by the Father. To prove this, let it be observed, that our justification is the act of God as a judge, though sitting on a throne of grace—that God exercises mercy without injuring justice—that no one can be justified without a perfect righteousness — that this perfect righteousness cannot be found in ourselves—that it can only be found in God, and therefore in Christ, who having taken upon himself the office of our surety, most fully satisfied God's justice, and "brought in everlasting righteousness," and was pleased to unite himself to us by a double tie—by his participating in our nature, and by our participating in his Spirit, in order that his righteousness might be imputed to us. Nor should the term *impute* occasion any surprise; for it is ofted used by Paul. That Christ's righteousness is imputed to us, the scripture plainly teaches: thus Paul—"By the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life: by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." (Rom. v. 18, 19.) And, "Christ was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." (2 Cor. v. 21.) For we are "made righteousness in Christ," in the same way as he was "made sin for us;" now he was made sin, inasmuch as our sins were imputed to him; and therefore we are made righteousness in him, because his righteousness is imputed to us. Thus Luther directs one to whom he writes, to address Christ thus—*Thou, Lord Jesus, art my righteousness, I am thy sin; thou tookest what was mine, and gavest me what was thine; thou assumedst what thou wast not, and madest me what I was not;* and in another place he represents the faithful soul as saying to Christ—*I am thy sin, thou art my righteousness; I therefore triumph securely, because neither my sin shall prevail above thy righteousness, nor shall thy righteousness suffer me to be or to continue a sinner.* It is only this righteousness which could have appeased the wrath of God, and obtained for us remission of sins. "Through this man," says Paul, "is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." (Acts xiii.

38, 39.) Therefore the Redeemer is called "Jehovah—or the Lord—our righteousness." (Jer. xxiii. 6.)

But here we may remark, that, when we say that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us, we mean nothing more, than that God treats us in the same manner, as if the obedience of Christ, which was performed on our account, were our own; which should no more appear strange, than that Christ should have been treated by the Father, as if he had really committed the sins which we only had committed, or that among men a debtor should be said to be free and discharged from all further obligation, on account of payment made by another person. Now this obedience of Christ hath obtained for us perfect remission of sins, and complete deliverance from all punishment; hence God is said to "cast all our sins behind his back, not to impute, to blot out, not to remember them," which could not be said, if he still demanded the penalty of our sins; hence it is that the justified are said to "have peace with God," and that "there is no condemnation to them;" which could not be said, if there were still any punishment to be suffered.

We do not, indeed, deny that believers are often exposed to various afflictions; which of themselves are real punishments for sin; according to the threatenings of the law, but which cease to be punishments to those who are reconciled with God in Christ; they are only fatherly chastisements, and are to be even numbered among the divine blessings; hence there is joy connected with them, and we may even "glory in them." They cannot, therefore, be called properly *punishments*, though they are so in their own nature, and tend to "the destruction of the flesh;" for they are not inflicted by God's anger for the recompense of sin and the destruction of the sinner. Here it may not be unprofitable to cite an excellent form of consolation, which is attributed to Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury, and in which there is an admirable view of our justification by the merits of Christ. The sick man is asked, *Dost thou believe that thou canst not be saved, but by the death of our Lord?* He replies in the affirmative. He is then addressed thus—*Therefore praise God, and give thanks to him always, as long as thou livest, and place all thy confidence, hope, and love in him, and in nothing else, and commit thy soul to the death and passion of our Lord Jesus Christ. And if the Supreme Judge should be pleased to enter into judgment with thee, then say unto him, Lord, I place the death*

of Christ between me and thy judgment, and I claim to myself no other merit. And should the Judge say, Thou hast deserved condemnation, then say, Lord, thy mercy and thy bitter death I place between me and thee.

This justification, moreover, is said to be by *faith*, as the scripture expressly teaches, (Rom. iii. 25. Gal. ii. 16,) but here we must observe, that faith does not properly justify us of itself, as though the act of believing were reckoned as our righteousness before God; because we are not justified, except by a perfect and complete righteousness, which certainly faith is not, and because our justification is particularly ascribed to the grace of God and the redemption by Christ, (Rom. iii. 24.) But justification is ascribed to faith for two reasons; not merely as it is the *condition* of the covenant, without which God *will not* forgive sins, and *upon* which he *will* forgive them. We must not, indeed, deny that many find fault with this mode of speaking, viz. that we are justified through faith, as the condition of the covenant; for they observe that there is, properly speaking, no condition of justification, except perfect obedience; that the law requires this, and that the gospel does not substitute any other obedience, but only shews that the law has been fully satisfied by the Surety Christ. But these are the reasons why justification is attributed to faith, viz. because through it we cleave to Christ, whose righteousness is the only foundation of our acceptance; and also because through it we apply that righteousness to ourselves, and by it alone are persuaded of the good will of God towards us. And not without reason is this office assigned to faith, before all other graces, because it alone, out of all others, can subsist or stand with divine grace, seeing that it is employed, as it were, in the mere receiving and apprehending of an object which is placed without it, and because, as Toletus a Papist observes, by *faith* it is more clearly shewn how man is justified, not by his own merit, but by the merit of Christ, and by it alone is "boasting excluded."

Although faith is a *work*, seeing it is an act of the mind, yet in the matter of justification it is distinguished from works; for faith only *receives*, it *gives* nothing, whereas works *give*, and do not *receive*. Let this be illustrated by a comparison—the reaching forth of the hand by a beggar, by which he receives alms, is the act and work of the beggar, yet it does not relieve him, as far as it is a work, but as far as in this way he applies

to himself the gift, and makes it his own. Nor did Paul, when he declared that man is not justified by works, mean that he could be justified by *evangelical*, though not by *legal* works. For in no place does he oppose the one to the other, but excludes *all* works. The works of Abraham and David had no share in their justification; and yet these were evangelical works.

We must not, however, omit to observe, that this faith, which is said to justify, is not true and living faith unless it be joined with repentance, hope, love, and other graces. God never forgives a man his sins, unless, while he believes, he also repents of sin, and firmly resolves to amend his life, and perform good works; for he does not justify, in order that we may be at liberty to sin for the future. Thus, then, there are two things without which there is no justification—one is *supposed*, and this is faith, including a firm resolution of doing good works; the other is *imposed*, and that is good works themselves. This may be illustrated by the following example — suppose a man to adopt a stranger as his son, and by this act of adoption to give him a title to his estate; this adoption cannot take place without something being *supposed* at the time, and another thing being *imposed* afterward; that which is supposed at the time is, that the person to be adopted is willing to serve his benefactor; that which is imposed is, that he actually do serve him. The effects of justification are peace of conscience, which is a mutual harmony between God and the justified sinner, the sense of divine love, the hope of glory, and joy in tribulation, (Rom. v. 1—5.)

As to the question which is sometimes raised, whether justification is from all eternity, or only in time, no one will deny that it was decreed from eternity, but still, it actually takes place only in time. For *calling* certainly takes place in time, and calling precedes justification, (Rom. viii. 30,) therefore the latter takes place in time also. Besides, we are justified by faith, which is in time, nor is God ever said to forgive sins, except a man first repent and believe. Justification therefore takes place in time, at the period of effectual calling, when a sinner is translated from a state of sin into a state of grace, and is united to Christ by faith. It is sensibly experienced by the believer, so that he knows he is justified; it is sealed at the hour of death, when God more particularly assures the soul, that its sins are forgiven; but the pub-

lic declaration of it will take place at the last day, when Christ upon his throne of grace will exercise the last solemn act of judgment, and will crown the faithful with that glory, to which he gave them a right and title by justifying them upon earth. Should it be inquired, whether remission or forgiveness be extended to *future* sins; although some divines contend, that, from the moment of our entrance into communion with Christ, there is no sin of which we do not obtain the remission, yet we think it better to say, that remission is not extended to future sins. For in the first place, as long as there is no sin, punishment is not due to it, and when it is not due, it cannot be said to be remitted. Again, to remission of sin are required repentance and confession, which therefore suppose sin to be actually committed; hence we are commanded to seek forgiveness daily, which can only be applied to actually committed sins. Observe, also, that when a believer falls into sin, the forgiveness he has once received is not done away, nor do the sins forgiven him, rise up again in judgment, but still he incurs the wrath of his heavenly Father, and stands in need of fresh forgiveness.

Finally, justification is the same or equal in all true believers, both of the Old and of the New Testament. "It is one God," says Paul, "which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith," (Rom. iii. 30.) The same truth is largely set forth in Rom. iv. and Heb. xi. Add to this what Peter says, that to Christ "give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins," (Acts x. 43.) It is true, however, that there is a difference between the justification of the ancient saints, and our own, in regard to the experience and degree of it.

CHAPTER III.

OF ADOPTION.

The other part of justification is *adoption*, or the bestowal of a right to eternal life, which flows from the im-

putation of Christ's righteousness, for "he was made under the law, to redeem us, that we might receive the adoption of sons," i. e. have a title to life, for "if children, then heirs," (Gal. iv. 4, 5. Rom. viii. 17.) The word *adoption* is sometimes taken for the external receiving of men into covenant with God, as was the case with the Jews, (Rom. ix. 4.) Hence the Israelites are called the "sons of God," and the "first-born," (Deut. xxxii. 19, 20. Exod. iv. 22.) Sometimes the word is taken for the experience and liberty of adoption, such as belongs to believers under the New Testament, who, having become as it were adult, and no longer children, are said to have received the spirit of adoption. Sometimes it is taken for the full manifestation of adoption, which shall take place in the future resurrection (Rom. viii. 23.) It is also taken for that act of God, by which, of his mere grace, through faith in Christ, he admits the elect into his family, and bestows on them the name and privilege of sons, for the obtaining of the eternal inheritance.

Now adoption, as the word is used in law, is a lawful act, in imitation of nature, instituted for the comfort of those who have no children of their own. The ceremony of adoption took place among the Romans in this form. The father and the person to be adopted presented themselves to the prætor, and then the former said to the latter, *Wilt thou become my son?* to which he replied, *I will.* In many respects *divine and human* adoption resemble each other; for both are acts of free favour—in both a stranger is admitted into the family—in both the name of the family is given, and also a title to the inheritance—both are the consequence of two acts, of which in divine adoption, one is the act of God's will, the other of our own; for God says in the gospel, "Wilt thou be my son?" and by faith we each answer, "I will." There is, however, a very great difference between human and divine adoption; the former was instituted to console the childless, and to supply the deficiency of nature; the latter takes place for our comfort, not for that of God, who had a Son, even his well-beloved—the former leads to the possession of the property of the deceased father; the latter to a share in the happiness of the Father everlasting—the one can bestow the name and titles, but not the disposition and qualities of sons; in the other, the adopting Lord changes the heart. Lastly, the one supposes its objects to be good, and does not make them so; the other does not suppose, but makes its objects good.

By this adoption we have God as our Father, and we are his children; not indeed by nature, as Christ was; nor as the angels, who are called the sons of God, because God created them, and stamped upon them the image of his holiness, and for other reasons; (Job. i. 6; xxxviii. 7;) nor as Adam, who is also called the son of God, (Luke iii. 38,) though this passage may be explained otherwise; but we are called the sons of God by grace, and because we have received from him a new nature. The dignity of this sonship appears from the dignity of Him who adopts—from the divine nature of which the adopted partake—from their spiritual union, and marriage with Christ — from the inheritance promised to them. By this adoption, also, we have free access to God and the knowledge of his mysteries, and are assured of his protection, care, and love. We have also a title to the blessings of grace and glory, and to the inheritance of heaven, which is purchased by the blood of Christ. At the same time we engage to pay unto God filial reverence, love, and obedience.

This privilege is common to all the faithful; still, under the Old Testament, "believers being under tutors and governors," though children, "differed nothing from servants," (Gal. iv. 1, 2,) nor did they enjoy the full exercise of their privilege, being in "the spirit of bondage." Whereas believers under the New Testament, being as it were adult, and in possession of their freedom, are admitted through Christ into the audience-chamber of their Father, and in "the spirit of adoption" are enabled to "cry, Abba, Father." Upon this word *Abba*, we may remark, what learned men observe, that the word *Abi* signifies a natural father, but at the same time an adopted or civil father, an elder, a master, a magistrate; but the word *Abba* signifies nothing but a natural father. Among the Jews none but a freeman was allowed to address any one by the title of *Abba*. This word descended to the Greeks; hence, in Callimachus, Diana calls Jupiter ἆππα, and Ausonius uses the verb *abare* for ἀδελφίζειν, i. e. to address any one kindly and familiarly, as a brother.

CHAPTER IV.

OF CHRISTIAN LIBERTY.

This is that which accompanies adoption; but it is not to be understood as an exemption from all laws human and divine, and a liberty to live at one's pleasure, and to indulge the lusts of the flesh; nor yet as an exemption from the jurisdiction of magistrates or governors; but as a mystical and spiritual freedom, by which we are delivered from the tyranny of sin, the curse of the law, and the yoke and bondage of the Levitical ceremonies, and being renewed by the Holy Spirit, offer a voluntary and cheerful obedience to God. The faithful, indeed, under the Old Testament, partook of this liberty, inasmuch as they were freed from the tyranny of sin, and the curse of the law; but those under the New Testament, in addition to these privileges, are exempt from the yoke of ceremonies, "the elements of the world," (Gal. iv. 3), and also from the judicial laws of the Israelites, which were peculiar to that nation.

To Christian liberty belongs *liberty of conscience*, by which the conscience is subject to God only, so that no authority can oblige the faithful to do any thing contrary to its dictates, and no human laws directly and immediately bind the conscience, although it may be subject to them indirectly and by the law of God. To Christian liberty belongs also the *free use of things* indifferent, which use, however, is regulated in scripture by these two rules—we must be fully assured that we are not doing wrong, when we use things indifferent, since "whatsoever is not of faith is sin," (Rom. xiv. 23.) We must also consider, not only what is "lawful," but also what is "expedient," (1 Cor. vi. 12; x. 23.) The 14th chapter of the epistle to the Romans is full of instruction on this subject.

In the enjoyment of our Christian liberty, we must also take care to abstain from giving any *offence*, or laying any *stumbling-block* before others, either by word or deed. We must have a particular regard to "the weak," nor must we make a free use even of things indifferent, if we

can perceive that thereby any persons will judge ill of our piety, or will be led by our conduct in this respect to undervalue religion. But by "the weak" we by no means understand persons who are obstinate in error or who design, as the apostle says, "to spy out our liberty," (Gal. ii. 4, 11, 12), but those brethren who are not yet sufficiently instructed in Christian liberty, like many of the Jews newly converted, for whose sake therefore the decree of the council at Jerusalem was framed, (Acts xv.) But I close this chapter with the excellent remarks of Calvin—*We must carefully observe*, says he, *that Christian liberty is in all its parts spiritual, that the whole force and design of it is directed to the pacifying of trembling consciences before God; whether they are uneasy about the forgiveness of sins, or full of doubt whether their imperfect and defiled services are acceptable to God; or whether they are perplexed about the use of things indifferent. Therefore a very wrong use is made of this liberty, both by those who make it a cloak for their lusts, so as to abuse the gifts of God to those lusts, and by those also, who think it no liberty at all, unless they openly display it before men, and consequently in so doing pay no regard whatever to weak brethren. The first of these kinds of abuse is much practised in the present age. There is scarcely any one, whose means permit him to be thus expensive, who is not delighted with the most profuse splendour in his entertainments, in his dress, and in his houses; who does not aim to be conspicuous among the rest by every kind of luxury; and who does not rest wonderfully self-complacent in all this prodigality—every thing being defended under the pretext of Christian liberty. 'These are things* indifferent,' *say they—I allow it, provided we use them* indifferently; *but when they are too eagerly sought after, and too prodigally used, though otherwise lawful in themselves, they become sinful by vicious excess.* (Institutes, b. iii. c. 19.)

CHAPTER V.

OF THE JUSTIFICATION OF A RIGHTEOUS MAN.

We have spoken of the justification of man as a *sinner;* we must now speak of his justification as a *righteous* man, i. e, that by which he proves that he is justified, and that he possesses a true justifying faith. Now this justification is *by works*, even in the sight of God, as well as of men; and of this James speaks, when he declares that "by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." (James ii. 24.) To illustrate this, we must remark that there is a two-fold accusation of man. First, he is accused before God's tribunal of the guilt of sin, and this accusation is met or done away by the justification of which we have already treated. Secondly, the man who has been thus justified may be accused of hypocrisy, false profession and unregeneracy; now he clears himself from this accusation, and justifies his faith by his works—this is his second justification; it differs from the first; for in the first a sinner is acquitted from guilt, in the second a godly man is distinguished from the ungodly. In the first God imputes the righteousness of Christ; in the second he pronounces judgment from the gift of holiness bestowed upon us; both these justifications the believer obtains, and therefore it is true that "by works he is justified, and not by faith only."

From these remarks it is plain, that James is easily reconciled with Paul, especially if we consider, that Paul had to do with justiciaries, who sought to be justified by the law, i. e. by their own works; but James had to deal with a sort of Epicureans, who, content with a mere profession, neglected good works; it is no wonder then, that Paul should insist upon faith, and James upon works. Moreover, Paul speaks of a lively and efficacious faith, but James of a faith without works. Paul also speaks of the justification of the ungodly or sinner, James of that justification, by which a man as it were justifies his faith, and proves himself to be justified. For it is his design to show that it is not enough for a Christian man to glory in the remission of sins, which is un-

questionably obtained only by a living faith in Christ, but that he must endeavour to make it manifest by his works, that he is truly renewed, that he possesses real faith and righteousness, and lives as becomes a regenerate and justified person. Hence it is plain, that Abraham is properly said to have been justified, when he offered up Isaac, because by this he proved that he had real faith, and cleared himself from every charge of hypocrisy, of which he might have been accused. In this sense that passage may be explained, (Rev. xxii.,) "he that is righteous, let him be righteous still," i. e. let him show by his works that he is justified; although the words may be differently read and explained. When James says that "by works was faith made perfect," (James ii. 22,) this is to be understood as referring to the efficacy of faith, which exercised itself in works, and proved that it was perfect, as when "strength is said to be made *perfect* in weakness," i. e. *fully known* and *declared*. Again, when it is said, that "the scripture was fulfilled which said, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness," (James ii. 23;) the meaning is, that it was *thereby* proved that he had been *before* justified by faith.

We may add a word or two concerning the justification of our own cause, as it may be called, of which we so often read in the Psalms of David, and in the book of Job, whereby we defend ourselves against the charges of the devil or even of our own friends; thus Paul says of himself, "With me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment," &c. (1 Cor. iv. 34.) Of this kind also was the justification of Phinehas, of whom it is read that the "judgment executed by him was counted unto him for righteousness," (Psalm cvi. 30, 31; Num. xxv. 11, 12,) i. e. he was judged to have acted rightly, although there seemed several things to be disapproved of in what he did; for it was not suitable for a priest, as Phinehas was, to stain his hands with blood; nor was he one of "the judges of Israel," (Num. xxv. 5,) who had the power of punishing the guilty; neither also did he observe the forms of a regular and lawful judgment.

The whole doctrine of justification displays the glory of God; it sets forth his amazing goodness, his inviolable justice, his wonderful wisdom; it humbles the sinner, takes away all ground of boasting, comforts the soul when cast down and harassed with a sense of its sins,

the accusation of the devil, and the terrors of the law, and tends to the promotion of real holiness.

CHAPTER VI.

OF SANCTIFICATION AND ITS CONNEXION WITH JUSTIFICATION.

We will first inquire, what *sanctification* is? It is sometimes taken for a separation from a common, and consecration to a sacred use; thus the persons appointed to conduct the service of the temple, were called *holy;* the temple itself, and its vessels and all the instruments of divine worship were called *holy;* the city of Jerusalem also was holy, and God is said to have *sanctified*, i. e. set apart the sabbath days. Sometimes the term is taken for a kind of *federal holiness*, arising from external calling, as Israel was said to be "holiness unto the Lord," (Jer. ii. 3;) sometimes for the whole of man's spiritual change under the gospel, in which sense it includes effectual calling; thus believers are described as the "sanctified." Sometimes the term is used more strictly, for that divine operation, whereby a man, who is already by faith united to Christ and justified, is, by the ministry of the word and the power of the Spirit, more and more separated from the world, delivered from his natural corruption, and made conformable to the image of God; his depraved habits and qualities are rectified, and holy ones are implanted, so that the man ceases from evil, and follows after what is good. To speak more fully on this subject, sanctification takes place, when God so illuminates the minds of believers, that they clearly understand all those things which tend to their greater confidence in the divine promises, and to their progress in real godliness. This illumination Paul prays for on behalf of the faithful: (Eph. i. 17, 18; Col. i. 9.) Also, when he produces in them an aversion to all evil, and implants in them a perfect hatred of sin, and an ardent desire after holiness; when he turns them from the creature to the Creator, restrains the tumult of the passions, and

brings them into subjection to the will and commandments of God; when, also, he brings the body into subjection, and restrains the eyes, the hands, the tongue, the ears, and other members, from being the occasions of sin. In short, by *sanctification*, the image of the old Adam is defaced, and the image of the second Adam is impressed. "The old man is put off," "the new man is put on," and all these things are effected by the power of the Holy Spirit.

This *sanctification* differs from *justification* in several respects: and they are expressly distinguished in scripture; thus (1 Cor. vi. 11,) "Ye are washed, ye are justified, ye are sanctified." Justification delivers us from the guilt, sanctification from the filth, of sin; justification consists in the remission of sins through the righteousness of Christ *imputed;* sanctification is the renewal of the soul, and is *inherent* in us; justification is perfect, and is *equal* in all that are justified; sanctification is *imperfect*, is bestowed in an *unequal* measure, and is gradually increased in every believer "according to the measure of the gift of Christ." But although these benefits are distinct, yet are they never separated; hence they are often designated in scripture by one and the same word, "There is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared," (Psalm cxxx. 4.) "The Lamb of God" is said "to take away the sin of the world," (John i. 29,) i. e. he takes it away by removing the curse, and washing away the stain. God has joined these two blessings together in the covenant of grace, in which he promises that "he will be merciful to the unrighteousness or sins of his people," and that "he will write his law in their hearts." (Jer. xxxi. 33, 34; Heb. viii. 10—12; x. 16.)

Nor does the nature of the case allow it to be otherwise; for the justice of God cannot permit him to adopt into his family, and bestow a title to eternal life upon any of our race, without at the same time stamping his own image upon them: since there can be no fellowship of light with darkness, and "without holiness no man shall see the Lord," (Heb. xii. 14,) nor can any "partake of the inheritance of the saints in light," unless first "made meet for it." (Col. i. 12.) Christ is not only "made unto us righteousness," but also "sanctification;" (1 Cor. i. 30;) he is not only our *surety*, who has made satisfaction for us, but also our head, who makes us holy by the communications of his grace; his death, which is the propitiation for our sins, furnishes us with numerous

motives to holiness; by showing us the heinousness of sin, God's hatred of it, the unspeakable love of Christ, and the property which he has acquired in us by that death. (Rom. xiv. 8, 9; 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20; 2 Cor. v. 14, 15; Titus ii. 14; 1 Peter ii. 24.) The *gospel* which reveals to us the good tidings of forgiveness, also urges us to holiness, as a *law*, commanding us to "deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." (Titus ii. 11, 12.) The *Spirit* which is given us, is also a "spirit of holiness," as well as a "spirit of adoption;" the *faith* which justifies us, "purifieth the heart," (Acts xv. 9,) the *baptism*, which is administered "for the remission of sins," is called "the washing of regeneration," (Titus iii. 5,) and if in the *Lord's Supper* the body of Christ broken, and the blood of Christ, shed, for sin, are exhibited to our eyes for the remission of our sins, they are also exhibited, as the nourishment of that spiritual life, which consists of *sanctification*.

We may add, that sanctification is sometimes set forth as the work of God in man; (1 Thess. v. 23;) at other times, as the duty of man towards God. (2 Cor. vii. 1; 1 Thess. iv. 3; 1 Peter i. 15, 16.) We may also make a few remarks on the *imperfection* of this sanctification. For that it is imperfect, is proved from all those passages of scripture in which it is said, that "sin always dwelleth in us," that "in many things we all offend," that "none can say he hath made his heart clean," that "there is not a just man, who doeth good, and sinneth not," and that we cannot say with truth, "We have no sin," (Prov. xx. 9; James iii. 2; 1 John i. 8,) &c. &c.; also from that single passage which says, "The flesh lusteth against the spirit," &c., (Gal. v. 17,) and similar passages. But here let us not confound the *struggle* which takes place in the *unregenerate*, with that which is in the *regenerate*. In the latter the struggle is between the flesh and the *spirit*; in the former between the flesh and *reason*; between lusts that are contrary to each other; for instance, between avarice and luxury; moreover, the unregenerate only feel this struggle when they commit gross sins; the regenerate when they commit the smallest or least sins. The imperfection of sanctification is also evident from the confession of all the saints, such as Job, David, Isaiah, Daniel, Paul, John, &c. &c., and also from the *daily* petition which we are directed to offer for forgiveness of sins.

We do not indeed deny, that we read in scripture of some persons who were *perfect*, and *perfectly* loved God and kept his commands, (2 Chron. xv. 17; Job i. 1; Luke i. 6,) but if we carefully examine the cases of these persons, we shall find that by *perfection* is only meant the *sincerity* of their obedience, and that they are called perfect, in comparison with others among whom they lived. We also allow that the scripture exhorts us to perfection, (Matt. v. 48.) not, however, as though we can *attain* to it on earth, but because we must always *aim at* it with all our might. Lastly, it should not be a matter of surprise that God, whose works are perfect, does not sanctify his people perfectly; for all his works are perfect in that mode, and in that degree, in which he wills them to be perfect; now he does indeed will us to be perfectly holy, but not in this life; therefore he makes us holy by degrees, while we live here below. Thus it has pleased him to make a difference between earth and heaven; thus it hath pleased him to exercise his people in the same way as he chose to exercise the Israelites, by suffering the Amorites and Philistines to remain in Canaan, that the former might not grow torpid through inactivity; thus also it has pleased him to show that salvation is owing to his own free grace, and that eternal life is given us by him, not as *weighing our* merits, but as *freely bestowing pardon.*

CHAPTER VII.

OF GOOD WORKS.

Sanctification is displayed and promoted by *good works;* in speaking of which we must consider, what is a good work, whether such works are necessary, and whether they merit eternal life. To produce a good work, it is required, *first*, that it be done according to the will of God revealed in his word, which is the only rule of faith and conduct; sin being a departure from this will of God. *Secondly*, that it be something *positive*, and not a bare ceasing from operation; otherwise the man who

sleeps or who is idle might be said to perform a good work; though it may be admitted that ceasing from operation may be called a good work, provided there is joined with it some positive and good intention, or if this cessation of action arises from the danger of falling into some sin, which the action, if performed, would occasion. *Thirdly*, that it be done in faith, i. e. with a firm persuasion that it is agreeable to God, since "whatsoever is not of faith is sin;" and "without faith it is impossible to please God," (Rom. xiv. 23; Heb. xi. 6,) and "to the defiled and *unbelieving* nothing is pure," (Titus i. 15.) Whatever, then, is done against the dictates of conscience, is sin; not that conscience is the supreme law of our actions, but it is a subordinate law; and therefore whoever acts contrary to the voice of conscience, commits sin, inasmuch as he does what he believes to be wrong. *Fourthly*, that it be done for a good end, namely, to "the glory of God;" (1 Cor. x. 31,) otherwise all actions are evil; thus, giving of alms, prayer, and fasting, are pronounced sins by Christ, (Matt. vi.) when they are done with the design of obtaining glory from men. Augustine rightly observes, *Whatever good is done by man, and is not done to that end for which true wisdom commands it to be done, although it appear good, it becomes sin, through its wrong end.*

Mere *intention* is not sufficient to constitute a good work; if it were so, there would be no need of the illumination of the mind, or of a right knowledge of the divine commandments; but whatever proceeded from a good intention would be pleasing to God, and therefore a good work; those who are of this opinion thereby make their own will the rule of all actions, and thus usurp the place of God. Neither is a *good purpose without action* sufficient; but the act must follow the purpose, or at least there must be nothing *on our part* to hinder it from following. From what has been said then, we conclude that the splendid actions of the heathen were not good works, since they wanted the above conditions. They were virtues of glass, if we may so speak; while they were transparent, they were broken: they united the splendour of the diamond with the brittleness of crystal. Many excellent things, indeed, are recorded of the heathen, as of Socrates, who is said to have been tolerant of injuries, possessed of firmness of mind, rectitude of purpose, frugality, chastity, and tem-

perance; and also of Aristides, who is said to have wronged no man, nor to have given cause for sorrow to any one, to have been the most strenuous advocate of justice, and distinguished for his honesty; similar virtues are recorded of Camillus, Fabricius, Cato, Epaminondas, and many others.

In order to account for these virtues, we may observe that a work must not be instantly pronounced good, because it has the appearance of being so; and the remark will apply to the virtues of the heathen, which Cicero made concerning their wisdom; *Those who were accounted wise, and called so, as M. Cato and C. Lælius, were not really wise; nor even the seven wise men themselves; but from a vast number of common and ordinary duties* which they performed, they bore the appearance and likeness of wise men.* We must observe also that those heathens merely offered incense to their own glory; for the pride of Socrates is pointed out not only by Aristophanes, but also by his own disciple Plato. Every one is acquainted with the pride of the Stoics, who maintained that *to live* indeed was owing to the gods, but to *live well* was owing to ourselves. In their actions, their aim was not to please God, but to please either themselves or other men. Plutarch relates of Aristides, called the Just, that *he injured no one, for this end, that he might make his way into the affections and good will of all.* We are far, however, from confounding the continence of Scipio with the monstrous depravity of Nero, or from confounding Fabricius with Catiline, not because the one was *good*, but *less bad* than the other, as Augustine observes.

As to the necessity of good works, it is clearly established from the express commands of God, from the necessity of our worshipping and serving God, from the nature of the covenant of grace, in which God promises every kind of blessing, but at the same time requires obedience, from the favours received at his hands, which are so many motives to good works, from the future glory which is promised, and to which good works stand related, as the means to the end, as the road to the goal, as seed-time to the harvest, as first fruits to the whole gathering, and as the contest to the victory, and from the necessity of consulting the advantage of our neighbours, and of "making our calling and election sure,"

* Or, duties which did not reach the perfection of virtue, *media officia.*

(which is done by good works.) These good works are performed by believers, and although they are not perfect, yet they may be truly called *good*, because they are wrought by the special influence of the Holy Spirit in their hearts, and by the assistance of God's grace; hence they please God, who promises them a reward.

But although they are good, they are not *meritorious*, or deserving of eternal life. This is evident from *four* considerations. *First*, a work, to be meritorious, must be our own, for no one can be said to deserve aught for what belongs to another; but good works are the gifts of grace, and the fruits of the Spirit, and there is no one who must not adopt Paul's language, "By the grace of God, I am what I am." (1 Cor. xv. 10.) *Secondly*, a meritorious work must be one that is *not due*, for no one can have any merit in paying what he owes; but good works are *due;* "When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which it was *our duty to do*," (Luke xvii. 10.) *Thirdly*, there must be a proportion, not only between him who deserves, and him from whom it is deserved, but also between the good work and the promised reward; but there is no proportion between the two in the present case; not even when the good work is martyrdom, the most excellent of all. For (all) "the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed," (Rom. viii. 18.) *Fourthly*, a meritorious good work must be *perfect;* for where there is sin, there cannot be merit; but our works are imperfect, and are therefore compared to "filthy rags," (Isaiah lxiv. 6.)

Hence eternal life is called "the gift of God," whereas death (eternal) is called "the wages of sin." (Rom. vi. 23.) Eternal life is also compared to an "inheritance," to which the idea of merit is inapplicable. It is indeed set forth under the character of a *reward*, but such a reward as is called "a gift by grace." Christ has most fully merited life and salvation for us, nor is there any need of the addition of human merits; nay, these cannot be added without affront to Christ. Even the blood of Christ cannot give us the power of meriting anything before God, because it cannot make us infinite, or produce any proportionate relation between God and men, or any proportion between our good works and eternal life. It cannot release our good works from their natural obligation, nor cause them to be done by our own

strength. And yet without these several conditions no merit can exist.

CHAPTER VIII.

OF THE DECALOGUE OR MORAL LAW.

Since the *moral law* is the rule of life and conduct, which law is comprised in the decalogue, or ten commandments, it will be necessary to give an exposition of it. But first we must make a few preliminary observations. This law is divided into two tables, one of which contains the sum of the obedience we owe to God, the other of that which we owe to man; it is also divided into ten commandments, of which the first four belong to the first, the last six to the second table. Again, there are certain rules for explaining the decalogue. The *first* rule is, that the negative are included in the affirmative, and the affirmative in the negative precepts, for what is good cannot be performed, without the opposite evil being avoided, nor the forbidden evil be avoided, without the opposite good being performed. The *second* rule is, that under one species, which is expressed, all the species of the same genus are comprehended; and where one fault is prohibited, all others of the same kind, and analogous to it, together with every thing that tends or leads to it, are also prohibited. The *third* rule is, that the cause is included in the effect, the species in the genus, the correlative in the relative. The *fourth* rule is, that the law regulates not only the outward actions, but also the inward thoughts of the mind. For "the law is spiritual," as Paul says; (Rom. vii. 14,) nor is the case the same with the heavenly Lawgiver, who searcheth the reins and the heart, as with an earthly lawgiver, who only takes cognizance of that which meets the senses. The *fifth* rule is, that *love* is the sum and end of all the commandments. The *sixth* rule is, that the *affirmative* precepts are not always binding, but admit of various interpretations and modifications according to time and

place; for instance, a son is not always bound to obey his father; but the negative precepts are always binding, at all times, and in all places, without any regard to circumstances. Moreover, there are certain rules of the obedience which is due to the law—it must be *sincere, universal, perfect, and persevering*. It must be performed by the whole man—the love of our neighbour must be subject to the love of God—and we must pay greater obedience to the *moral* precepts of the second table, than to the *ceremonial* precepts of the first, because God will have mercy, and not sacrifice.

Having laid down these rules, let us now come to the commandments of the law, before which God has placed a kind of preface, in order that the law, which he is about to deliver, may not be despised. He uses three arguments to enforce its sanction, viz. the *power* and *right* which he claims to himself, and by which he binds his chosen people to obedience—the *promise* of grace, by the sweetness of which he wins them to the pursuit of holiness—and the *service* he has done them, by which he will convict them of ingratitude unless they make a suitable return for his kindness.

In the *first* commandment, in which it is forbidden "to have any other gods than one," there is forbidden atheism, polytheism, magic, the worship of the creatures, angels, saints, relics, and images; and there is commanded the true acknowledgment of God, fear, and reverence, love, hope, and confidence towards him, prayer, obedience, and thanksgiving—in short all the duties of true religion. We call this the *first* commandment, in opposition to their opinion, who say that the words, "I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, and out of the house of bondage," constitute the *first* commandment; as was the opinion of the more modern Jews, and of some of the fathers.

In the *second* commandment God forbids two things—to make the invisible and incomprehensible Being the object of our senses, or to represent him under any outward form; and to worship images in any way whatever. The wiser heathens believed that the deity ought not to be represented by any image; for Numa, as Plutarch relates, forbade any image of the deity to be made, resembling either man, or beast; nor was there before among the Romans, any graven image of God; but for the 160 years which preceded, while they were continually erecting temples and places of worship, they

made no material representation of their divinities, because *they thought*, as it is said, *that it was profane to liken superior to inferior things, and that we could have no other idea of God than by the mind.* And Antiphanes declared that *God could not be known from any image, nor be visible to the eyes, and that he could not resemble any thing.* This commandment also forbids every kind of idolatry, whatever is comprehended in the scripture under this name; it condemns also those who make those images, which they know will be worshipped by idolaters.*

In the *third* commandment it is forbidden, not indeed to swear by the name of God; for this God expressly enjoins, (Deut. vi. 13. Jer. iv. 2,) and an oath is necessary for the confirmation of the truth, and putting "an end to all strife;" but it forbids all profanation of God's name, viz. all blasphemy, (Lev. xxiv. 16.) The Rabbins relate, that there was among the Jews, what was called *the judgment of zeal*, whereby those were acquitted from guilt, who, on hearing the name of God blasphemed, had killed the blasphemers without waiting for the sanction of the magistrate. There is also here forbidden all abuse of God's name in things unlawful—"all rash and trifling oaths; for the name of God is forbidden to be taken in *vain*, and not merely *falsely*, and therefore the Septuagint renders לשוא by ἐπὶ ματαίῳ,—all oaths sworn by the creatures, (Matt. v. 34, 35. James v. 12.) Thus in Jer. v. 7, they are condemned who "swore by those which are no gods," whence it is plain that the Pharisees were ignorant of the meaning of this command, when they thought it lawful to swear by the *temple* and the *altar*. It also forbids all perjuries, (Psalm xxiv. 4,)—all rash imprecations, and all rash and trifling vows, such as are those which are made in actions evil in their own nature, or in actions, good in themselves, but preventing a greater good; in things impossible, and in things useless and foolish. In this commandment we are also enjoined to observe the highest reverence towards God, and to think, speak, and do nothing, which may in any way tend to dishonour Him.

The *fourth* commandment enjoins the sanctification of the sabbath, which is done both by the *pastors*, and by the *flock*. The pastors sanctify it by the preaching

* And therefore it must condemn also those who derive any gain, profit, or revenue from idolatrous worship.

of sound doctrine—by the due administration of the sacraments—by the offering up of public prayers—by the pure and affectionate visitation of the flock committed to them. The people sanctify it by the attentive hearing of the word—by public and private prayer—by reading and meditating on the sacred scriptures—by works of love—by mutual exhortations — by ceasing from their ordinary and worldly occupations. Those *works* are excepted, which have an immediate reference to the worship and glory of God; also works of *charity* and *mercy*, and therefore the Pharisees falsely accused Christ for healing the sick on this day; also works of *necessity*, imposed on us by Providence, such as preparing food, kindling fire, or defending ourselves against the attack of enemies. We must observe further, that in this fourth commandment there is something *ceremonial* and something *moral;* the ceremonial part is the consecration of the seventh day to God, the moral is the consecration of some part of time to God; for it is a part of divine worship, to worship God in the public assemblies or congregations, which cannot be done, unless the time of meeting be agreed upon by the worshippers. The Jews, on the sabbath day did not dare to gather the manna, to cut wood, to kindle a fire, to bake, or to seethe, &c. &c. (Exod. xvi. 29. Num. xv. 32. Exod. xxxv. 3; xvi. 23;) nay, some of the Pharisees carried their scruples so far, as not to dare even to roast an apple, to peel garlick, or to kill a gnat. Observe also, that the sabbath was a sign of the covenant between God and the Israelites, (Exod. xxxi. 13. Ezek. xx 12,) and that it shadowed forth that twofold *rest* of believers which they obtain in Christ; viz. their *spiritual* rest, which consists both in peace of conscience, and ceasing from evil works, and their *heavenly* rest, in which they shall be free from all their troubles, and from all sin. Lastly, let it be observed that the sabbath was abolished, with other ceremonies of the law, and in the place of it succeeded *the Lord's day;* which the apostles did not *expressly command*, but which they observed; whose example therefore the church is bound to imitate, although one day is not in itself holier than another. A more suitable day could not have been selected, than the Lord's day, on which Christ the Redeemer of the world arose from the dead, having completed the work of our redemption; and on which the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the apostles.

In the *fifth* commandment, called "the first commandment with promise," (Eph. vi. 2,) reverence, obedience, gratitude, and love are enjoined, not only upon children, towards their parents, but also upon all inferiors, towards their superiors; and at the same time, love, regard, good-will, fidelity, and justice, are enjoined upon superiors towards their inferiors. This commandment forbids contempt and disobedience of children to their parents, and that inhumanity, which leads the former to refuse the latter assistance in their need and distress. Hence we see why the Pharisees were condemned, who, under the vain pretence of piety to God, maintained that they were exempt from the duties they owed to their parents, by making use of this form of vow, "It is corban, or a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest have been profited by me," (namely, had it not been due to the service of God;) also, what is to be thought of those who think that children may choose such a mode of life, as will divert them from the obedience due to their parents. This commandment also forbids disobedience of servants to masters, ingratitude of scholars towards their teachers, of people towards their pastors, and of dependants towards their patrons; contempt of the younger toward their elders, and of *pretended* submission on the part of inferiors towards their superiors.

In the *sixth* commandment is forbidden, not the *homicide* which is done by the authority of the judge or magistrate, for the scriptures command this; nor does Christian charity forbid it; it is private revenge that is forbidden, not the just punishment of crimes. Neither is the right of war here forbidden, which is allowed in the Old Testament, and not condemned by the New; neither that homicide, which is committed against one who makes a violent attempt upon a man's life, though with these conditions—that the defender be altogether blameless in the matter, and no way of escape given him from his adversary—that it be done with the single intention of self-defence—and that it be done in the very act of their meeting together. As for accidental homicide, this is no sin, not being foreseen. But there is forbidden in this commandment *all homicide* which is committed upon our own private authority and ill design, whether it proceed from hatred, or revenge, and whether it be perpetrated by violence or by craft, by sword or by poison, directly or indirectly. *Self-murder* is also forbidden, by which a man sins against God, himself, his family, the

commonwealth, and the church. This kind of murder the wiser among the heathen condemned; for Virgil represents those who have laid hands upon themselves, as separated from the lot of the blessed in the Elysian fields—

> Proxima deinde tenent mœsti loca, qui sibi lethum
> Insontes peperêre manu, lucumque perosi
> Projecêre animas.

> *The next in place and punishment are they,*
> *Who prodigally threw their lives away—*
> *Fools, who, repining at their wretched state,*
> *And loathing anxious life, suborned their fate.*

And the Pythagoreans maintained that we were placed by God in this world, as in a post or station, from which it was unlawful to depart without the consent of our leader. *Duels* also are here forbidden, which no plea can render lawful; not the defence of empty honour; not the infliction of vengeance; not the clearing one's self from an accusation. The sixth commandment also forbids hatred, the desire of revenge, envy, abusive language, and the motions of inward anger: in short, whatever is contrary to the true and sincere love of our neighbour, or the lawful defence of ourselves. (Lev. xix. 17, 18; Zech. viii. 16, 17; Matt. v. 21, 22.) It also enjoins the defence and assistance of our neighbour, love, gentleness, and the pursuit of peace and concord.

The *seventh* commandment forbids all unlawful intercourse, such as whoredom, adultery, incest, rape, concubinage, sodomy, and polygamy, which is contrary to the original institution of marriage, (Gen. ii. 24; Mal. ii. 15; Matt. xix. 4—6;) and to the injunction of Paul, who teaches, that the husband and wife respectively "have not power of their own bodies." (1 Cor. vii. 4.) It forbids also all filthy conversation and gestures, (Rom. xiii. 13; Eph. iv. 29; Col. iii. 8;) every thing that is repugnant to Christian temperance and sobriety, the inward motions of concupiscence, even lustful looks. (Matt. v. 28.) It also enjoins modesty, chastity, temperance, and all those virtues which tend to the true sanctification of the mind and body.

The *eighth* commandment forbids *theft*, which may be defined, *the laying hands upon, or making use of, what belongs to another, against the will of the owner.* It also forbids sacrilege, embezzlement, plagiarism, robbery,

&c. It also forbids immoderate and griping usury, tricks, frauds, and all over-reachings in merchandize, weights, measures, &c. It also forbids covetousness, idleness, and sloth. In this commandment are required contentment, frugality, sincerity, justice, and charity to the poor and needy.

In the *ninth* commandment are forbidden false testimony, slander, unjust judgment, backbiting, lying, and every species of hypocrisy; while truth, candour, fidelity, the defence of our neighbour's reputation, his due commendation, together with just and charitable judgments, are enjoined.

The *tenth* commandment forbids all unlawful lusts, even the first risings of concupiscence, which "could not have been known but by the law," as the apostle says. It serves the purpose of bridling the motions and desires of the heart; of taking the mask from hypocrites who make a display of outward sanctity, and humbling their pride; of showing more clearly the nature of the Lawgiver, and of the obedience due to him, and of exposing more fully our own corruption and weakness. There may be said to be three objects of lust or evil desire, namely, *pleasure*, *riches*, and *honour*; pleasures stir up *lust* (properly so called,) riches *avarice*, and honours *ambition*. The fountain of this evil desire is not dried up in this life, but the streams are cut off by the Holy Spirit in the regenerate, so as not to break out into open action. The remedy for the disease of concupiscence is, to contemplate the death of Christ, and to think of our own.

Now this law, the ten commandments, which have been briefly explained, is a perfect rule of conduct, to which nothing must be added, and from which nothing must be taken; for it comprises all the duties we owe to God and our neighbour; since it requires us to love God with all our heart, and with all our strength, and our neighbour as ourselves. The true meaning of it the Pharisees had perverted; Christ therefore vindicated it from their glosses; but in so doing he did not correct the law itself, but only the false interpretations of it by the Jews. Whatever, therefore, is enjoined in the Old and New Testaments, may be referred to this law.

CHAPTER IX.

OF REPENTANCE.

Since sanctification is imperfect, and we fail in many things, *repentance* is necessary. This word is taken in two senses. It signifies that entire change, by which a sinner is turned from sin to righteousness; in this sense it is used in Luke xxiv. 47; Acts iii. 19; xxvi. 20. It also signifies that act of a sinner, whereby he mourns and grieves for his sins, desires deliverance from them, and forms the resolution of amending his life; in this sense the term is used, Matt. iii. 2; iv. 17. The Greeks use the word μετανόια and μεταμέλεια, which are sometimes used promiscuously, though some think that μεταμέλεια denotes grief of mind, and μετανόια conversion itself; that the former is used concerning those who do not truly repent, as Judas,—the latter never in this sense. It is, however, certain, that the origin of the words does not prove this distinction, that the Greek writers use them indifferently, and that they are so used in scripture; for μεταμέλεια is taken in a good sense, Matt. xxi. 29, 30, and μετανόια in a bad sense. Luke xvii. 3, 4; Matt. xii. 41. The Septuagint also renders the Hebrew word by both Greek words indifferently.

To true repentance the knowledge or acknowledgment of sin is necessary, (Psalm li. 3;) also sorrow for sin, and that of "a godly sort," (2 Cor. vii. 10,) which arises from the consideration of sin, from the fear of punishment, but especially from the thought of having offended God. The effects of this sorrow are *confession*, made either to God, (Psalm li. 4, 5; xxxviii. 4; 1 John i. 9,) or publicly with the whole church; (Neh. ix. 2, 3,) or in the presence of the church for public offences; (2 Cor. ii. 6,) or before men, and our offended brethren, in order to reconciliation. (James v. 16.) Also *tears*, as in the case of David, Peter, and Magdalene, (Psalm vi. 6; Matt. xxvi. 75; Luke vii. 38;) and sometimes *fasting*, together with a full *purpose of amendment* of life; hence the works of new obedience are called "fruits meet for repentance." (Matt. iii. 8.) Repentance may be also divided into three

kinds—that by which we repent of our sins in general—that by which we repent of particular sins—and that by which we repent of sins unknown to us, or committed through error.

The author of repentance is God, who uses various methods to produce it in us, such as his *word*, which is accompanied by the influence of the Spirit; in this word there are found many things which operate as motives to repentance; for it proclaims the anger of God against the impenitent—examples of divine judgment—various benefits by which we are encouraged to repent—promises of grace and forgiveness to the penitent—and examples of divine mercy towards such. God also sends various *afflictions* upon those sinners whom he designs to lead to repentance, and also different judgments upon mankind, in order to alarm those whom he designs to convert. Repentance, in order to be acceptable to God, must be prompt, sincere, uninterrupted, and persevering.

But the question has been raised, whether repentance is found in the unconverted or reprobate? If by repentance we understand nothing more than some sorrow on account of sins committed, we grant that it may be found in the reprobate; but if we mean true repentance, we are sure that this can be found only in believers. There is another question also, whether repentance precedes or follows faith? We reply, that the acts of repentance must be distinguished; a *sense* of sin, and *sorrow* for it, do *precede* faith; but *renewal* of heart, and the *practice* of good works do *follow* faith. It is also inquired, why it is said that one penitent sinner causes more joy in heaven than ninety nine just persons? (Luke xv. 7.) The answer is, because in the conversion of sinners there is a brighter display of the wisdom, goodness, and power of God. The Jews had a saying, that, when a Hebrew sinned, the angels *wept;* Christ declares that when a sinner repents, the angels *rejoice.*

The *opposites* of repentance, are *false penitence*, and *impenitence.* The former belongs to those, who pretend that they are sorry for the sins they have committed, and yet are not sorry; as Pharaoh, Simon Magus, and those who content themselves with an outward show of piety, and the observance of certain ceremonies. Impenitence is shown by those, who are not sorry for sins committed, and are not willing to amend their lives; and this is *temporary* or *final.* There are different causes of this impenitence, such as a notion that there is no

God, or that he does not attend to human affairs—the false hope of impunity, from a rash persuasion of God's infinite mercy—and sometimes a despair of obtaining pardon. Now the punishments of impenitence are various, both of a temporal and of a spiritual nature, in this life, and in the next. (Lev. xxvi.; Deut. xxviii.; Ezek. xiv.; Rom. i. 25—28; Eph. iv. 18, 19; John iii. 36; Rom. ii. 4, 5.) But to the penitent free remission of sins is promised, (Ezek. xviii. 21; Prov. xxviii. 13; Acts iii. 19.)

Since we have just hinted at religious *fasting*, it will be well to make a few remarks upon it. And first, it is of divine institution. (Joel i. 14; ii. 15; Matt. vi. 16, 17.) It was frequently practised under the Old Testament. (Lev. xvi. 29; Ezra viii. 21; Zech. vii. 5; viii. 19.) Under the New Testament no fixed time for fasting has been prescribed by Christ and his apostles, but every one is allowed to fast in time of mourning, of public or private calamity, whether present or imminent, and for the sake of obtaining any good, or averting any evil, of a temporal or a spiritual nature, without the superstitious observance of any particular day. Observe also, that fasting is a thing neither good nor evil in itself, "for the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness," &c. (Rom. xiv. 17.) It may tend greatly both to restrain the wantonness of the flesh, and to give the mind a greater freedom and fervour in the worship and service of God. Nor must it be observed after the manner of hypocrites, but it must be joined with true devotion and holiness of life, (Isaiah lviii. 6, 7.)

CHAPTER X.

OF PRAYER AND OATHS.

As *prayer* very much tends to promote sanctification, we shall now speak of it; first observing that by prayer, the whole worship of God is to be understood, and thus "every one that calleth upon the name of the Lord shall be saved," (Acts ii. 21; Rom. x. 13.) Now prayer is

here taken for invoking, or calling on the divine Being, either in secret desires, or express words, that he would grant things needful to ourselves and to others; united with a confidence of being heard and answered. It is religious worship, and the greatest sacrifice which can be offered to God; for he to whom we pray, is *omniscient;* hearing and understanding every petition, even the secret desire, and knowing the necessities of all men. He is also *omnipotent*, and is able to grant our requests; he is *gracious* and *kind*, and refuses not to grant what is asked; (James i. 5,) and therefore God alone is to be invoked; he alone is the proper object of our trust and confidence. It follows then, that the saints are not to be prayed to, nor to receive any religious worship, though we are bound to think well of these blessed servants of God, now admitted into full communion with him,—to cherish the pleasing remembrance of them, to praise their warfare and their victory, to maintain their doctrine, to admire and imitate their virtues, and to thank God on their behalf. Now that they are not to be worshipped will appear to every one who considers—that such worship is nowhere enjoined in scripture—that, on the contrary, we are commanded to worship and serve God only—that *to pray*, when used absolutely, means *to pray to God*, there being no lawful invocation of any except God—that no example of praying to saints appears in scripture—that the saints are not omniscient or omnipotent, and that such a practice was unknown to the apostolic age, and to the first and purer ages of the church afterwards.

The necessity of prayer is proved from two things; *first*, from the *command* of God; (Matt. vii. 7; Luke xxi. 36; Psalm l, 15,) to which also a promise is added, "Ask, and it shall be given you," "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do," (John xiv. 13.) For although God knows what we need, he yet chooses that we shall ask; he requires this homage of us, by which we express our humility and faith, and acknowledge the majesty, truth, all-sufficiency, omniscience, and omnipotence, and inexhaustible goodness of the Lord. *Secondly*, from the *sense of our own wants* the necessity of prayer is evident. The very heathen acknowledged this necessity; Socrates prayed continually, and Plato enjoins this duty upon all. Now we ought to pray, not only for ourselves, but for others also, (James v. 16; Eph. vi. 18; I Tim. ii. 1, 2,) not only for our friends, but even for our

enemies, (Matt. v. 44). To pray, indeed, for the *dead*, we conceive to be absurd; for no command of the kind is recorded—no example of the kind is found in scripture—and we can obtain nothing for the departed; nothing for the godly, who are already saved; nothing for the ungodly, who are irrevocably excluded from salvation.

As to the subject of our prayers, we may ask all things that are agreeable to the will of God, (1 John v. 14,) and which are consistent with our calling; both spiritual and temporal good, but the former *absolutely*, the latter *conditionally*, i. e. if it tend to God's glory, and to our own salvation; which reminds us of the excellent petition of an ancient poet recorded by Plato—

Ζευ βασιλευ, τα μεν εσθλα και ευχομενοις και ανευκτοις
Αμμι διδου, τα δε δεινα και ἐυχομένοις ἀπαλεξοις.

If asked, or not, great Ruler of the sky,
Give good; but evil, e'en if asked, deny.

The conditions or requirements of prayer are, that it be offered *in faith*, i. e. a firm persuasion of being accepted of God in Christ; and that the thing we ask is good, conducive to God's glory, and to our real happiness. Prayer should be offered with seriousness, with earnestness, with fervour and affection, with pure heart and hands, with constancy and perseverance, with humility, with brotherly love, and in the name of Jesus Christ, (James i. 6; 1 Cor. xiv. 15; James v. 16; 2 Tim. ii. 22; 1 Tim. ii. 8; Eph. vi. 18: 1 Thess. v. 17; Luke xviii. 1, 13; Matt. v. 23, 24; John xiv. 13, 14.) Bodily gestures are lawful in prayer, since they express our awful reverence of God, and true humility in his sight, and also as they assist in promoting attention of the mind during this sacred exercise. The *bending or bowing of the knees*, was the posture commonly used by the saints in the Old Testament, (1 Kings viii. 54; 2 Chron. vi. 13; Ezra ix. 5; Dan. vi. 10; Acts vii. 60; xx. 36; xxi. 5; Eph. iii. 14,) and this posture has every where obtained in the Christian church; sometimes *standing* was used, (Luke xviii. 13.) Justin, in his Apology, describing the public services of the Lord's day, says, *Then we all rise up together, and pour forth prayers.* And again, *On the Lord's day, we offer up, standing, three prayers, in remembrance of him who rose on the*

third day. In the Liturgy improperly ascribed to Mark, the deacon is represented as exclaiming, *Let us stand up to pray.* We may only add, that under the New Testament we are not tied to any place, but *every where* it is lawful to lift up holy hands, (1 Tim. ii. 8). Of all prayers the most excellent is the Lord's Prayer, which many writers have explained.

An *oath* is, strictly speaking, a species of prayer, by which we appeal to God, the searcher of hearts, as a witness of those things which we affirm or promise; and as an avenger, if we swear falsely. That such an oath is lawful, is proved from those places of scripture which evidently show God to have been the author of an oath, as a means of settling contention, (Exod. xxii. 11; Heb. vi. 16,) and from the example of the saints, particularly Paul, Rom. i. 9; 2 Cor. i. 23; xi. 31; Gal. i. 20; Phil. i. 8; 1 Thess. ii. 5; v. 27,) and it is expressly said of the angel, that "he lifted up his hand to heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever and ever," (Rev. x. 5, 6.) In order that an oath may be properly taken, it should be taken in the name of God—not in that of the creatures; hence Christ condemns those who swear by heaven, by Jerusalem, &c. It ought also to be expressed in plain words, without any equivocation; not rashly, but after serious and careful deliberation: but it ought not to be taken for any thing trifling and of little consequence, but for a thing which tends to God's glory, and to the putting an end to serious dissensions.

An oath is commonly considered, as either *affirmatory*, or *promissory.* The former is that by which we assert any thing in the name of God, the latter, by which we bind ourselves to the performance of something. It is not lawful for those who are under the power of others, to take any such oath. Nor is it lawful for any one to bind himself to what is sinful; therefore the Jews were wrong, who bound themselves by oath to eat nothing, until they had killed Paul, (Acts xxiii. 12); and David also, when he swore that he would destroy the house of Nabal. (1 Sam. xxv. 22.) Neither should an oath be taken concerning a thing that is impossible.

We may add a few remarks concerning *vows;* by which we oblige ourselves before God, either to do, or to leave undone something, as we think it will serve to promote his glory and our own salvation, and show our gratitude to him. Now we must observe, that every vow must be made to God only, (Deut. xxiii. 21; Psalm

lxxvi. 11.) For it is a kind of prayer, by which we implore his help; and it sometimes contains an imprecation of punishment, in case of not paying what we vow. It must also be made voluntarily, and by those who are at their own disposal. (Num. xxx. 6, 9.) The subject of a vow, also must not be of an evil nature, as was the case with Micah's mother, (Judges xvii. 3,) and with the Jews, (Acts xxiii. 12.) It must be what is possible, not what is foolish and useless, unnecessary and unavoidable, nor that which would divert us from something better. Moreover, if in process of time vows become hurtful, with respect to ourselves or others, or impossible, or evil, they ought not to be kept; in all other cases they are binding. There are two kinds of vows—one *general*, which we undertake in baptism, and which we often repeat, when we dedicate ourselves to God; the other *particular*, by which we specially consecrate something to God; but it must be carefully noted, that the latter vow ought never to be contrary to the former.

CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY.

BOOK THE NINTH.

OF GLORIFICATION.

CHAPTER I.

OF THE STATE OF THE SOUL AFTER DEATH.

"Whom he justified, them he also glorified," (Rom. viii. 30.) This *glorification* commences even in this life, by a sense of God's love in Christ; by peace, joy, the communication of spiritual gifts, and also by sanctification; hence Paul passes from justification immediately to glorification. But what takes place very imperfectly in this world, will be brought to perfection as soon as the soul is separated from the body, when the former is conveyed by the ministry of angels into heaven, while the tabernacle of the body is committed to the grave in hope of a future resurrection. To speak more particularly on this subject, the soul does not perish with the body, but survives it; reason proves this, and scripture confirms it, "The dust shall return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." (Eccles. xii. 7; also Matt. xxii. 32.) To which may be added those passages, in which believers in the hour of death commend their souls to God, (Acts vii. 59; 1 Peter iv. 19.) Nor is the soul, when it survives the body, asleep or insensible, which is a state bordering on annihilation; for this does not appear to be compatible with the nature of a spirit, whose essence cannot be conceived as without *thought* Here we must distinguish between those

operations, in which the soul needs the assistance of the body, and its other operations; the former it does not exercise, after death, the latter it certainly does; for if it ceased to think, it would cease to exist. Besides, why should believers desire dissolution, if they were without any delightful communion with God after death; and why should the scripture pronounce them blessed, when dead? We must observe, also, that the soul, after this life, goes either into heaven or into hell, and into no other place; for the scripture mentions no other, neither purgatory, nor limbus, nor subterranean caverns, nor Lethean streams; whatever is asserted in reference to such things, is founded on pretended revelations, on false appearances, and on vain arguments. That the souls of believers are made happy in heaven, is proved from the passage which declares, that "blessed are the dead which die in the Lord;" from the words of Christ to the penitent thief, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise;" from the desire of Paul "to depart and to be with Christ;" and from his words elsewhere, "We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." (Rev. xiv. 13; Luke xxiii. 43; Phil. i. 23; 2 Cor. v. 1.) This heaven is called "Paradise," "the bosom of Abraham," (Luke xvi. 22,) in allusion to the custom of the ancients at their feasts, in which the head of one guest reclined as it were on the bosom of another; as it is recorded of John, (John xiii. 23,) because, as Christ reclined on the upper part of the couch, John was nearest to him, and therefore is said to have "leaned upon his bosom." That the souls of the ungodly are sent down into hell, the "place of torment," is proved also from scripture, (Luke xvi. 28,) which describes it as "outer darkness," (Matt. xxii. 13; Mark ix. 43, 44,) in allusion to the suppers of the ancients, at which the interior of the house was illuminated with lamps, but on the outside there was nothing but the darkness of night.

CHAPTER II.

OF THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD.

The state of the soul after death is followed by the resurrection of the body from the dead; a doctrine which appeared ridiculous to the heathens, was denied by the Sadducees, and many other succeeding heretics, but which is the foundation of the Christian religion. Before we speak particularly of it, we must observe, that we are not treating of the mystical and spiritual resurrection of man, i. e. his regeneration and conversion to God, (Eph. ii. 5; v. 14; Col. ii. 12; iii. 1;) nor of that which divines call a *civil* resurrection, which is nothing more than deliverance from a great calamity, and restoration from a miserable to a happier condition; but of a proper corporeal resurrection, and that too, not the particular resurrection of some persons, as recorded both in the Old and New Testaments, but the universal resurrection of all men, which will take place at the last day.

Now that this resurrection will take place, is proved by innumerable passages of scripture. Thus Christ makes use of the remarkable words of God, saying, "I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob," to prove this doctrine, (Matt. xxii. 31, 32;) for since the covenant of grace, in which God promises to be the God of these his servants, not only refers to their separated spirits, but also to their entire persons, which God was pleased should bear the seal of the covenant marked on their bodies; it follows, that the life promised in the covenant extends to the body, as well as to the soul. Aben Ezra, commenting on the words, "I am the Lord your God," (Lev. xviii. 4,) says, that they contain the promise of life in both worlds. The words of Job, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," (Job xix. 25—27,) refer to the resurrection of the body, and not to the restoration, in this life, of felicity once enjoyed; for Job despaired of the restoration of his earthly felicity here below, as is evident from chap. vi. 8, 9, 11; vii. 7, 8; x.

20, 21; xvi. 22; xvii. 11, 13; xix. 20. Hence Jerome asserted, that no one after Christ, spoke so plainly of the resurrection, as Job had done before Christ. This doctrine is further evident from Psalm xvii. 15, "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake with thy likeness;" also from Dan. xii. 2. "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake," &c.; and from innumerable passages in the New Testament, such as John v. 28, 29; vi. 39, 40, 44; xi. 24—26; Acts iv. 2; xvii. 18; xxiii. 6; xxiv. 15; the whole of 1 Cor. xv.; 1 Thess. iv. 13—16; Rev. xx. 5, 6. We also infer the universal resurrection from the resurrection of Christ, which gave occasion to the ancients to call the latter *the key of our graves*, and the pledge of our resurrection. For, besides that Christ was the Redeemer of our bodies and souls, (whence it follows, that he must raise our bodies to enjoy with our souls the life obtained by him,) we may say, that the state of the members must be the same as that of the head; for what sort of a body would that be, the head of which was alive, while the members were dead? "Because I live, ye shall live also," (John xiv. 19.) Christ rising from the dead "became the first fruits of them that slept." As therefore the first fruits were offered to God, on the morrow after the sabbath, in the hope, or rather for the consecration, of the harvest that was to follow, so Christ, coming forth out of the grave, and lifted up before the presence of God, as the first fruits, consecrated all his people to God, so that they should in the time of harvest rise to the same life as their Saviour. A proof of the resurrection may be also derived from the justice and goodness of God; for as virtue and vice belong to the whole man, and not to one part of him only, so it is right, that the recompense due to both should extend to the whole man, and not merely to a part. "Every one must receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad," (2 Cor. v. 10.) A further proof may be derived from the indwelling Spirit, who hath chosen our bodies to be his temples, (1 Cor. iii. 16; vi. 19.) Would the Holy Ghost permit his temples always to remain in the dust, and his dwelling-places to perish for ever? "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you," (Rom. viii. 11.)

We must indeed acknowledge that it is difficult to conceive the manner of the resurrection; but since this is the work of a Being, whose knowledge nothing can escape, and whose power nothing can resist, who can think it impossible? We can no more conceive how God will raise the bodies of the dead, than how he formed Adam's body out of the dust. God can by a single act of his will restore whatever at any time has been either devoured and consumed by beasts or men, or reduced to ashes, or dissolved into moisture, or attenuated into air. An emblem of this resurrection Paul exhibits to us in the seed, which first dies, and then rises again, (1 Cor. xv. 36—38.) Minucius Felix replies to Cæcilius, who derided the Christians' expectation that they should rise again after being reduced to dust and ashes, in the following words: *Behold how for our comfort all nature sets forth the future resurrection. The sun sets and rises again, the stars decline and return, the flowers perish and revive, plants and trees flourish again after their decay, the seeds do not spring up again, without first being corrupted. Thus our bodies lie hid in the grave, as the trees in winter time conceal their greenness under the appearance of barrenness. We must therefore wait for the spring-time of these bodies.*

All men will rise again; not only the godly, but also the ungodly; this is proved from the passage already quoted, (2 Cor. v. 10,) as also from Acts xxiv. 15, where Paul professes his hope that "there shall be a resurrection from the dead, both of the just and unjust." See also John v. 28, 29. Rev. xx. 12—15. But when we say that all will rise again, we except those who will be alive at the time of Christ's coming, and who will therefore be only transformed or changed; as the apostle says, "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed," and "the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air," (1 Cor. xv. 52. 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17.) Hence those that are to be judged, are divided into the living and the dead. (Acts x. 43.) But in what way this change will take place, we are altogether ignorant. Yet, although the godly and the ungodly will rise again, the resurrection of both will be different; that of the godly will be effected by Christ, as their Head, through the power of his quickening Spirit, to immortal glory; that of the ungodly will be

effected also by Christ, but as their Lord and Judge, through his almighty power, unto eternal punishment.

The buried bodies will rise again, the same as to their substance; which is proved from the very nature of the resurrection, which is nothing more than *the second state of a thing that has fallen or decayed;* for only that which is fallen can be said to rise again; if a new body were formed by God, it would not be a *resurrection*, but a *creation.* It is proved also from scripture, "In my flesh," says Job, "I shall see God, whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold." (Job. xix. 26, 27.) The same body which "is sown in corruption, and dishonour, shall be raised in incorruption" and glory, (1 Cor. xv. 42, 43, 53, 54,) and be "made like unto Christ's glorious body," (Phil. iii. 21.) It is evident also from the resemblance of our resurrection to that of Christ's; for Christ did not assume a different body from the one he had before; hence he declares, "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself," (Luke xxiv. 39,) and also from the justice of God, which requires that the same body that sinned, should be punished, the same that fought the good fight should be crowned; and as the same soul shall be arraigned in judgment, so also the same body; nor indeed can it be conceived, that God would punish bodies that had contracted no evil, and spare those which had committed sin, and that he would leave without any reward those bodies which ministered to the soul in fastings, prayers, praises, and other exercises of religion, while he bestowed the crown of righteousness on bodies which performed nothing. Ambrose therefore justly observes, *This is the proper order and proceeding of justice, that since there is a common act of the body and soul, so that the former brings into action the thoughts of the latter; both should stand in judgment; both should be either punished or glorified. All flesh, even the same flesh, perfect and entire, shall rise again,* says Tertullian.

But although the bodies will be the same in substance, they will be very different in quality; the bodies of the faithful will be raised in "incorruption, glory, and power;" the bodies of the wicked will also be incorruptible, but so prepared as to be able, without food or sleep, to endure the torments of hell for evermore. We need scarcely add, that Christ by his omnipotence, will raise up our bodies; this resurrection being a work of infinite power; and that it will take place at the last day. We

may learn from this doctrine, to comfort ourselves against the terrors of death, to encourage ourselves to endure with fortitude all our trials, and to make those bodies which are to be raised to immortality, "the instruments of righteousness."

CHAPTER III.

OF THE END OF THE WORLD.

The heathens believed in the consummation of all things, or the end of the world; hence those lines of Ovid–

> Esse quoque in fatis reminiscitur, adfore tempus,
> Quo mare, quo tellus, correptaque regia cœli,
> Ardeat, et mundi moles operosa laboret.

> *He calls to mind that there will come a time,*
> *Decreed by fate, when earth, and sea, and sky,*
> *Enwrapp'd in flames shall burn, and the vast globe*
> *Shall sink to ruin.*

Hence Censorinus compared the age of the world to one vast year, of which the winter was the deluge, and the summer the burning of the earth; and the Chinese believe, that after a certain period of years, the world will be burnt up by fire from heaven. But what the heathens obscurely foresaw, the scripture plainly reveals, (Psalm cii 26. 2 Peter iii. 7. Rev. xxi. 1.) Now we know not the period of this consummation; for "of that hour knoweth no man." One day is hidden from us that all may be improved; the last hour the Lord has been pleased to keep unknown to us, that we might always be expecting it, and, since we cannot foresee it, be continually preparing for it. It was the opinion of the Jews, and of some of the fathers, that the world would last 6000 years; but the reasons which they adduce are extremely futile.

The scripture teaches us that there will be various signs preceding this great event; among others a multi-

tude of false prophets and deceivers, wars and tumults through the whole world, pestilences and earthquakes, a terrible consternation, the persecution of the godly, and extreme corruption of manners, profound security, the universal propagation of the gospel, the revelation and destruction of Anti-Christ, and especially the conversion of the Jews, which Paul expressly declares, (Rom. xi. 12, 25, 26.) Christ also declares that there shall be "signs in heaven," (Matt. xxiv. 29. Luke xxi. 25, 26.) But it is not clear, what is to be understood by "the sign of the Son of man," (Matt. xxiv. 30,) whether the Son of man himself appearing in the clouds, or the rays of his glory, or something else. The Jews reckon fifteen signs that are to precede the last day, but they are mere ridiculous fancies.

That the world at this period will be burned with fire, is declared by Peter, (2 Pet. iii. 7, 10, 12,) and that in this manner it will be renewed. For we do not believe that by this last conflagration, the world will be reduced to nothing, but only changed and renewed, as is evident from Psalm cii. 26, where it is said, that "all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed;" for in these words the destruction of the world and the creatures is expressed by the term *changing;* also from 2 Peter iii. 10, 12, where it is said, that "the elements shall melt with fervent heat;" like unto metals; and also from verses 5—7, where the second world is compared with the first, which being overflowed with a deluge, yet emerged from that deluge, restored, not annihilated. But the same point is particularly clear from Rom. viii. 21, 22, where the creature is said to "groan and wait," until it "shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption unto the glorious liberty of the children of God;" for this would by no means be said, if the creatures were to be annihilated. Nor is it probable, that God could choose to destroy so many glorious works; and therefore they will remain as monuments of the eternal power, wisdom and goodness of God; will set forth his glory, and be perpetual objects of admiration to us. The creatures will undergo a change, and by that change will be delivered from all those abuses, which men now make of them by their idolatry and wickedness; they will no longer serve the purposes of sin and sinners, but will furnish a variety of means for praising and glorifying God. The mode of this transformation is however

entirely unknown to us, nor must we curiously pry into it. But "seeing that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of God."

CHAPTER IV.

OF THE LAST JUDGMENT.

THAT there shall be a final judgment, is clear from the scriptures, which declare, "God shall bring every work into judgment." "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all." "He hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness." (Eccles. xii. 14. Jude 15. Acts xvii. 31. See also Matt. xii. 36; xvi. 27. 2 Cor. v. 10. 2 Tim. iv. 1.) It is clear also from the consideration of God's justice and providence; the justice of God requires that it should be well with the good, and ill with the wicked; but this is not the case in this life, very often the contrary; for virtue is most frequently trodden under foot, while vice reigns triumphant. It is also evident from the testimony of conscience, which accuses, torments, and condemns the wicked, summoning them even now to the bar of Christ; and also from the consent of nations; for what else did the heathens mean, when they pretended that Rhamnusia, the avenging goddess, Minos, Rhadamanthus, and Æacus, would judge mankind in the shades below?

We must consider who will be the judge. God is the judge; but, by a particular dispensation, judgment will be exercised by Christ, to whom it has been committed by the Father; "for the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." (John v. 22; Acts x. 42; xvii. 31.) And this is that most awful and sublime act, by which Christ, coming again from heaven with supreme glory and majesty, will judge the whole universe. He will execute judgment in that nature in which he suffered for us. *He will sit as Judge: he who*

once stood before the judge; he who was falsely made guilty, will condemn those who are really guilty, says Augustine. This will tend very much both to the consolation of the godly, who will have for their judge, their Advocate and Brother; and to the terror of the ungodly, who will see him reigning, whom they persecuted. He will exercise judgment according to both his natures; the *divine* conferring infinite knowledge and power, the *human* visibly performing the acts of judgment. He will judge as *God*, because it belongs to God only to know all things; he alone can "make manifest the counsels of the hearts;" he alone possesses power to execute such judgment. He will also judge as *man*, seeing that in human nature he will pronounce sentence. He possesses all the qualities of a judge; he will be supreme, from whom there can be no appeal; omniscient; all-righteous; all-powerful. His glory will be resplendent. (Matt. xxv. 31.) He will be surrounded by his angels, (Luke ix. 26; 2 Thess. i. 7; Jude 14,) who will gather all that are to be judged, will separate them, will cast down the wicked into the place of torment, and probably raise up the righteous to heaven. (Matt. xxv. 32; xiii. 41, 42, 49.) Whether the saints will be assessors to Christ in this judgment, we cannot determine; we do not believe it can be inferred from the passage in 1 Cor. vi. 2, 3.

We must consider, also, who will be judged. *All* will be judged, both angels and men: we cannot doubt as to evil angels, for they are said to be "reserved unto judgment." (2 Peter ii. 4.) Perhaps we might say that their judgment has already been passed, but that they are reserved for punishment, which will be inflicted after the final judgment, far more grievously than that which they now suffer. We cannot affirm anything concerning the judgment of good angels, who are everywhere described as attendants of Christ the Judge. But besides angels, all mankind will be judged, (Rom. xiv. 10—12; 2 Cor. v. 10,) of every sex and condition, of all places, and of all ages—not one will be exempt from judgment. And if it be inquired, for what things we shall be judged, we answer,—that all outward actions will be judged, (Jude 15; Rev. xx. 12, 13,)—and words, even vain and idle ones, (Matt. xii. 36, 37,)—the secrets of men, whether actions performed, unknown to all, or inward thoughts, (Eccles. xii. 14; 1 Cor. iv. 5,)—and all omissions of duty, (Matt. iii. 10; xxv. 30; Luke xii. 47; James iv. 17.)

If it be inquired, what will be the nature or form of the judgment, we reply, that it will consist in these three things—the *trial of the cause*, the *passing of the sentence*, and the *execution* of it. The trial of the cause will not be difficult to an omniscient Judge. (Heb. iv. 13.) All "the books will be opened," (Dan. vii. 10; Rev. xx. 12;) the book of God's *providence* and *omniscience*—the book of *conscience*, in which will be found written what good and evil has been done by every one—and the book of *life*. By all these books, the scripture means, that nothing will be unknown to the Judge, the metaphor or figure being taken from the practice of human courts of justice. The rule of judgment will be *revelation;* the heathen will be judged by the *law of nature*; the Jews by the *written law*, or legal dispensation; Christians by the *gospel*; for "those who have sinned without law, and those in the law, shall be judged without law, and by the law." (Rom. ii. 12.) The passing of sentence will take place after the trial of the cause; first, the sentence of acquittal, then that of condemnation; the Judge will begin with the former, to show that he is more willing to pardon than to punish; and to the greater joy of the faithful, and to the greater sorrow of the wicked. It might appear strange to some, that Christ, in describing the kind of judgment which he will exercise at the last day, does not mention any works, except works of mercy towards himself, whereas neither the performance of them can be ascribed to, nor the neglect of them be charged upon, vast numbers of persons who have never heard of Christ; but it has been justly observed, that these are only brought forward by Christ by way of specimen or example, as some good works out of many. There is a question also raised, as to whether the sins of the righteous, as well as of the wicked, will be brought forth to view? We do not think they will; first, because, if they were, it would turn to the confusion of the righteous, who are surely not then to be confounded: again, because the free mercy of Christ will not remember the offences of believers; nor is it likely, that Christ will reproach his own members with their iniquities. Finally, the execution of the sentence will follow—"The wicked shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal." (Matt. xxv. 46.) None will be able to escape the power of the Judge; to deceive his wisdom; to move his equity; or to recall his sentence. He will neither be prepossessed by favour, nor influenced

by mercy, nor corrupted by gifts, nor appeased by repentance or satisfaction.

As to the place and time of judgment, we read of "the clouds and the air;" "behold he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him." (Rev. i. 7; Matt. xxiv. 30; 1 Thess. iv. 17.) It is ridiculous to make the valley of Jehoshaphat the place of judgment, from a misunderstanding of Joel iii. 2; for the valley there means every place, where God will pour out judgments on the enemies of his church. It is merely a figurative representation of the deliverance of the church from the hands of the wicked; as God formerly granted to Jehoshaphat a remarkable victory over the Moabites and Ammonites. The time of judgment will be, doubtless, at the end of the world. I will add nothing more than the words which are attributed to Jerome—*Whether I eat, or whether I drink, or whatever else I do, a voice seems always to sound in my ears, Arise, ye dead, and come to judgment. As oft as I think of the day of judgment, I tremble through my whole soul and body. For if there is any sweetness in the present life, it must be so enjoyed, that the bitterness of the future judgment be never effaced from my remembrance.*

CHAPTER V.

OF HELL AND HEAVEN.

The Hebrew word שאל, and the Greek ἀδης, are generally taken in scripture, indeed almost always, for the *grave:* we must here take it for the place of the condemned, "the place of torment, prepared for the devil and his angels." The word *gehenna* is taken from the valley of the sons of *Hinnom*, where the wicked Israelites, in their horrible worship of Moloch, in imitation of the cruel superstition of the Phenicians, were accustomed to pass their children through the fire, or having enclosed them in the red-hot arms of the idol-statue, to burn them with dreadful tortures, in the midst of the noise of drums and

other instruments. The same arguments which prove that there is a final judgment, prove that there is a hell; but the place of this hell it is unprofitable to investigate.

The torments of hell will consist, not in annihilation, but in being deprived of all good, and banished from the glorious presence of God; in the sense of divine anger, and in the greatest possible pains. Whether the body will be cast into the material element of fire, and whether the soul itself will be tormented in flames, has been disputed; we omit these as curious questions. Let it be enough only to observe, that there will be inequalities of punishment—"Verily I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city." (Matt. x. 15.) Nor is this matter of surprise; the punishment ougnt to be proportioned to the fault, and every one knows that some sins are greater than others. (Matt. xxiii. 14; Luke xii. 47, 48.) Observe also, that the punishment of hell will be so intense, as to be neither conceived nor expressed; which is evident from such phrases in scripture, as the gnawing "worm," the "burning fire," the "weeping and gnashing of teeth," the "pangs of travail." It will also be eternal; hence the scripture speaks of "everlasting fire," of "eternal death," of "the worm that dieth not," of "the fire that is not quenched." Nor is it to be wondered that it is eternal, since the damned have offended infinite Majesty, and will never cease to sin against Him.

We must add a word or two upon eternal life; and we may say that the felicity of believers will not be one single good, but a condition made up of all kinds of good. It will consist of freedom from all evil, and from all sin; of the perfect knowledge of God, whom we shall behold; of familiar intercourse and intimate union with him; of the possession of all those good things which flow from divine communion; of the vision of Christ; of supreme love to God; of unspeakable joy; in short, of as great a degree of enjoyment, as can belong to the creature.

This happiness no tongue can express, no pen can describe; hence the scripture sets it forth under emblems taken from the most excellent, agreeable, and useful objects; which being well known, we need not enumerate. But the following remarks must be attended to. We must not imagine that the divine essence can be seen with the bodily eyes, as some have dreamed; for how is

it possible for a spirit to be an object of the senses? But *seeing God* only means the *perfect knowledge* of him, as great as the creature can attain, "seeing no longer through a glass darkly;" and also the *possession* of him. The glorified will not, therefore, know God in every respect, as though nothing would be hid from them; for a finite being cannot comprehend the infinite, and the faithful will be ignorant of far more than they will know; but whatever *can* be known by them, *will* be known. Their felicity also, will be eternal; they will live and reign with God for ever; the very heathens acknowledged that complete felicity could not consist with the fear of losing it. Not only will their souls be happy, but their bodies will be glorious; free from all corruption and sin; made like unto Christ's glorious body; immortal, subject to no evil and pain, bright and splendid, scarcely tolerable to mortal eyes; a specimen of which splendour was exhibited in the shining face of Moses, and in the transfiguration of our Saviour; strong and vigorous; swift and agile; spiritual, i. e. no longer standing in need of food and clothing. The glorified will praise God for ever, not only with the mind, but also with the mouth, although we know not what language they will use. Their abode will be in heaven; hence, "the inheritance" is said to be "reserved for them in heaven." (1 Peter i. 4; John xiv. 2, 3; 2 Cor. v. 1.) It is disputed, whether there are degrees of glory, as well as of punishment; it is probable, and appears to be inferred from some passages, especially 1 Cor. iii. 14, 15; 2 Cor. ix. 6. The thing, however, is not plain, although there is no difficulty in conceiving that God can increase the sense of his love, and the knowledge of himself, even to infinity.

CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY.

BOOK THE TENTH.

OF THE CHURCH.

CHAPTER I.

OF THE WORD CHURCH, ITS MEANING AND DEFINITION.

Thus far we have treated of the offices and benefits of Christ; the order of subjects now requires us to treat of *the Church*, for which alone the blessings of grace are designed, and to which they are applied: for the Saviour had no other design in coming into the world, than to gather to himself a people, and to call them to a participation of grace and glory. The word *ecclesia* (which we translate church), is derived from ἐκκαλεῖν, to *call out;* it was the term given in the republics to an assembly of people, which was called together by public notice, and collected into a certain place. There were also the Greek words συναγωγὴ, ἐπισυναγωγη, πανηγύρις, and the Hebrew word קהל, from which appears to be derived the word καλεῖν among the Greeks, and also the *calata comitia* among the Romans, which were called together by the voice of the public crier. It must however be observed that the word συναγωγὴ answers to the Hebrew עדה, and generally in the New Testament denotes the religious assemblies of the Jews, or the place of such assemblies, (Luke vii. 5.) Indeed the most learned men observe that there is scarcely one passage in scripture, in which this word is used to denote the assemblies of Christians. The apostle does indeed admonish the Hebrews "not to for-

sake the assembling of themselves together," ἐπισυναγωγὴν αὐτῶν, (Heb. x. 25,) but he uses the term, in order to accommodate himself to the modes of expression used by those whom he addressed; and after all he does not use the simple word συναγωγή. James only uses this term, (James ii. 2,) where, however, he principally addresses Jews, who he knew would be pleased by the use of so familiar a term. The word πανήγυρις is used by the apostle in Heb. xii. 23, and it was employed by the Greeks to denote that convention or assembly of people, which was invited to any public spectacle or exhibition, and the speech which was made before this assembly was called πανηγυρικὸς λόγος, *a panegyric*.

But although the word ἐκκλησία is sometimes used for any public assembly, whether confused and tumultuous, or convened for some fixed purpose, (Acts xix. 32, 40; Psalm xxvi. 12, *Sept.*;) yet it is certain, that both in the Old and New Testaments it denotes a sacred or religious assembly, and it signifies either the whole company of the elect, effectually called by the word and Spirit of God, the mystical body, of which Christ is the head, (Eph. v. 23,) or else the whole number of those who profess the faith of Christ, and participate in the same means of grace; as when the church is said to have "increased daily;" (Acts xvi. 5,) and every where we read of the churches of Rome, Ephesus, &c.; in which number there are two classes of men, those who are Christians by outward profession, and those who are real believers. In this respect the church is compared to a *threshing-floor*, in which the chaff is mingled with the wheat; to a *net*, in which there are good and bad fishes; to a *house*, in which there are vessels of gold and silver, and of wood and earth. The word church may also denote the assembly of spiritual rulers and pastors, to whom is committed the dispensation of the word and sacraments, and the administration of discipline, which definition Christ, according to many persons, referred to, when he said, "Tell it to the church," (Matt. xviii. 17.)

Now the ground of this threefold acceptation of the word is, that the church may be considered, either in reference to its *internal communion* with Christ, or to its *external* profession, or to its *ecclesiastical rule* or *government*. According to these different respects it may be differently defined. In the first point of view it is defined to be, a religious society of elect persons, whom God effectually calls by his word and Spirit, and who

not only profess to believe in Christ, but really believe in him, and prove their faith by newness of life. In the second view it is defined to be a religious society of men called by the preaching of the gospel. In the third it is an assembly of the rulers and pastors of the church, who are furnished with a lawful call and with lawful authority, to preach the word, to administer the sacraments, and to maintain holy discipline.

CHAPTER II.

OF THE TRUE CHURCH.

We have said that the church is a religious society of elect persons, effectually called through the ministry of the word and the operation of the Spirit. Now we call it a *society*, because we must not think that one person constitutes a church, nor even that several persons, except they are united together, can form a church; hence the church is called a *flock*, &c. We call it also a *religious* society, to distinguish it from natural and civil associations, such as those of families, cities, provinces, commonwealths; as also those of arts, sciences, trades and professions; whereas the church is a society of persons united together by the ties of conscience or moral feeling. Again, we call it a society of *elect* persons, to distinguish it from such religious societies as are formed and united together under the mere influence of nature.* And also a society of *elect* persons, who are *called* by God, because election only is not sufficient to constitute a true member of the church. Lastly, we call it a society of men *effectually* called, and *truly* believing, in order to exclude from the church hypocrites and reprobate persons.

Upon these grounds we may reply to several questions. It is inquired, *first*, whether *hypocrites* and *un-*

* "Solo naturæ motu," says the author. Perhaps he means simply natural religion, or any other religion but that founded on the word of God.

converted men are true members of that church of which Christ is the head, and whether those privileges belong to them, which Christ grants to his church? We reply in the negative, and maintain this opinion, *first*, from the different titles given to the church, in its relation to Christ. Thus it is called "the body of Christ," and its members "the members of Christ:" (Eph. v. 23; Col. i. 18); but the body of Christ is no other than that which is destined to be saved, which "grows and increases in love," (Eph. iv. 15, 16,) and which is animated by the Spirit of Christ; and *Christ*, says Augustine, *cannot have any members who are in a state of condemnation.* It is also called "the spouse or bride of Christ," so clearly united to him, that they are not two, but one; now Christ has never united unconverted persons to himself; they cleave to the world, and not to Christ. It is also called "the fold of Christ," (John x. 16); now those only are the sheep of Christ who hear his voice, and follow him, and to whom he gives eternal life, so that they shall never perish. It is also called "the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven," (Heb. xii. 23.) This opinion is also evident from considering that those only are true members of the church, who possess what essentially belongs to the true church, viz. *faith*, *hope*, and *charity*, but these graces are not in the unconverted; and that that only is the true church, to which the promises of saving grace peculiarly belong; now no one will say that these promises belong to the unbelieving and ungodly. We must confess, indeed, that hypocrites are in the visible communion of the church, and that they make the same profession of faith, and use the same sacraments as true believers; but then it is not enough, to constitute a man a real member of the church, that he hear the word, profess faith, and partake of the sacraments, something more is necessary, viz. that he really possess faith, hope, and charity; and therefore the apostle declares, "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us," (1 John ii. 19,) from which passage it is plain, that the apostle means to say, that not all, who seem to be, are in reality members of the church. *Hypocrites and wicked persons*, says Augustine, *are in the body of Christ, in the same way as ill humours are in the human body; when they are got out, the body is relieved; so the church is relieved, when the wicked go out of it, and it is*

enabled to say, Those humours are gone out from me, but they were not of me.

Again, the question is raised, whether *unbaptized* and *excommunicate* persons belong to the church? In regard to the former, we say that they are in the church the moment they have true faith, and profess it, although they are not baptized; and therefore that they can be saved in this state, because they are in the covenant; they are partakers of Christ and his benefits, as we cannot doubt that innumerable martyrs, who died without receiving baptism, obtained salvation. In respect to *excommunicate* persons, we say, that only those are really out of the church, who content with an outward profession, have had no real communion of faith and love with Christ and his people; but that other *excommunicate* persons are *not* out of the church, neither those who have been unjustly excommunicated, (which excommunication being unjust, cannot in any way cut them off from communion with Christ), nor those who, though justly cast out from external communion, retain that which is internal, and do not utterly lose the seed of faith and repentance, although they may die without being received again into the church, through the exercise of a harsh and severe discipline by the pastors of it.

CHAPTER III.

OF THE UNITY, HOLINESS, AND UNIVERSALITY OF THE CHURCH.

Among the attributes or characters of the church, the first is its *unity*. For since it is a sacred society, comprehending all the elect, it is necessary to have a point of union by which all those elect may be connected with each other; and this unity consists in those bonds which join the members together. Now as the church may be considered in reference to its external and internal state, so the bonds are of two kinds; some are *inward*, others *outward*; moreover, some of them are *essential*, others

accidental. The *inward bonds* are, 1. the unity of the *Spirit*, (Eph. iv. 3; 1 Cor. xii. 13). The Spirit is the soul of the church; by this unity of the Spirit two or more societies, which are animated by this same Spirit, constitute one body, though they may be unknown to each other; thus we ourselves form one body with other churches in distant parts of the world. 2. The unity of *faith*, Eph. iv. 5. i. e. one and the same doctrine of salvation, set forth in the gospel, and embraced by faith. 3. The unity of *charity* or *love*, which follows that of faith, and by which the faithful, who are united to Christ, are also united with each other in love, so that they may "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace;" and therefore charity is called "the bond of perfectness," (Col. iii. 14.) 4. The unity of *hope*, (Eph. iv. 4,) i. e. of the thing hoped for, the heavenly inheritance, to which "we are all called." The *outward* bonds are, the unity of *sacraments*, such as that of baptism; (Eph. iv. 5,) and the unity of *ministry*. Now all these are also *essential* bonds of union; there are others which are *accidental;* such as agreement in all doctrines, and uniformity of laws, government, and discipline.

Schism is the breaking of those bonds which constitute the unity of the church, of which schism there are two sorts—*universal* schism, by which men renounce those general truths, which constitute the foundation of Christianity, and are admitted by all Christian communities—and *particular* schism, by which men renounce some truths, which are indeed of great moment, but not equally fundamental. All *separation* is not *schism*, although all *schism* is *separation;* but all *unlawful* separation is schism.

The church is said to be *holy*, because God hath separated it from the world to be "a peculiar people;" (Titus ii. 14;) because it follows after holiness, not that shadowy holiness, which marked the Jewish nation, but real and genuine;—because it has been *purified* and sanctified by the Holy Ghost. It may also be called *holy*, in reference to the system which it teaches, which in the purity of its doctrines and precepts surpasses every thing, however praiseworthy, which we read in all the records of legislators, hierophants, and philosophers.

It is called *catholic*, not only because of its *orthodoxy*, in which sense the fathers used the word *catholic*, calling the emperors *catholic* and orthodox, (hence a decree was passed by Theodosius, that only the churches of

those should be called *catholic*, who acknowledged and worshipped the holy Trinity, and that those who were of a different opinion should be called *heretics*,) but also because it is extended throughout the whole world, in contradistinction to the church under the Old Testament, which was confined within the narrow limits of Judea; and because it is composed without distinction of any race, order, and condition of men; "for there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek;" (Rom. x. 12; Acts x. 35,) and finally, because it will continue through all ages even unto the end of the world.

CHAPTER IV.

OF THE CHURCH, AS VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE.

As the calling of the church is of two kinds, *external* by the word, *internal* by the Spirit, and as the state of the church is also twofold, *outward* and *inward*, so it may be considered as *visible* and *invisible*. It is called *visible* in regard to *men*, who constitute it, and who are visible; in regard to the *preaching* of the word, and *administration* of the sacraments, in which view the ministry of the gospel is termed a *candlestick*, which gives light in the church; and in regard to the brightness with which it sometimes shines in the world. It is called *invisible* in regard to *faith*, *hope*, and *charity*, which constitute the essence of the church, and which are known only to God; and also in regard to the *faithful*, as such; for although the faithful are visible as men, they are not visible as faithful men, for many seem to be such, who are not so. We must regard the church as we do a human being; for the same man may be said to be visible and invisible; visible as to his body, invisible as to his soul. But that this subject may be rendered still plainer, we may raise the four following questions.

The *first* question is, whether it can be certainly known, that any society is a Christian society, or a true church? To which we reply, that this may be known,

if we see any body of persons who profess the Christian religion, and that it can be certainly known whether such a body is a church of Christ; for we have only to ascertain, whether its ministry is conformable to the word of God; whether it takes away nothing from that word, and adds nothing to it; for if this church have such a ministry, and be found free from heresy, superstition and idolatry, opposed to domination over the conscience, and to corrupt manners, it may be safely concluded that under such a ministry and communion God is preserving and bringing up his own people, and every one who beholds this church may justly say, Here is a communion in which there are "such as shall be saved." The reason is, because God nowhere preserves the public ministry of the word, without having there some of his elect.

The *second* question is, whether those who are true members of the church, can be distinctly known? We reply, that they cannot be altogether distinctly: it may indeed be said in the judgment of charity, that this or that man is a believer, but this judgment is neither certain nor infallible; and in this respect the church is called *invisible;* "he is not a (true) Jew who is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh," (Rom. ii. 28,) the things which make a man a true Christian, are faith, hope, and charity—"the Lord alone knoweth them that are his," (2 Tim. ii. 19,) therefore the gift of regeneration is called "the hidden man;" the church is Christ's spouse, whose beauty is inward, "all glorious within." (Psalm xlv. 13.) Neither is it absolutely necessary to have a particular recognition in persons; it is necessary for a man who will unite himself to a church, to know where a true church is, but not to know in particular what individuals are genuine members of it.

The *third* question is, whether the true church is always *visible as a church,* i. e. as far as relates to its public assemblies, which are open to all? The reply is, that sometimes the church is so persecuted, that no assembly in it is manifest to the world: like Christ its head, it has its state of humiliation and exaltation; sometimes it enjoys in peace the administration of its sacred things, and shines with the pure light of its ministry, and the open celebration of divine worship; at other times it is compelled by the rage of persecution, and the influence of heresy, to lie concealed, as a dove in the clefts of a

rock; this was the case under the Old Testament in the time of Elijah, who imagined himself left alone, although there were 7000 men, who had not bowed the knee to Baal, 1 Kings xix. Also in the times of which Azariah spoke to Asa, saying, "Now for a long season Israel hath been without the true God, and without a teaching priest, and without law," (2 Chron. xv. 3.) Also under Ahaz, Manasseh, and Amon, and other wicked kings, under whom the daily sacrifice was interrupted; the doors of the temple shut; an altar built by Urijah the priest after the pattern of the altar at Damascus, and idolatry every where introduced. (2 Kings xvi. 10, 15; 2 Chron. xxxiii. 3, 4, 22, 23.) The church also lay hid during the Babylonish captivity, in which the faithful lamented over their "prophets," and their "signs," taken away from them; also during the first persecutions, when the faithful were compelled to conceal themselves in dens and caves; likewise during the rage of the Arian persecutors, when the orthodox were deprived of the free exercise of their religion; finally, very often under the domination of Antichrist. During all these periods, however, God sealed his servants with his seal, Rev. vii. 3, and preserved his church in a wonderful manner.

The *fourth* question is, whether the church is always so visible, as a true church, that it may at any time be said, *Here is the true church.* The answer is, that there are some periods in which the ministry is so corrupt, the word of God so neglected, and the whole of Christianity so shrouded in error, superstition, and false worship, that, judging from outward appearances, it can hardly be said, *Here is the church of God.* In this state was the church of the Old Testament under the Judges, when after the death of Joshua, the Israelites left the God of their fathers, and went after other gods; (Judges ii. 12; iii. 6, 7,) and thus it was also in the times of Antichrist before the Reformation. Thus in the church we must always distinguish its *external* and *internal* condition, its times of *prosperity*, and of *persecution*, its *pure*, and its *corrupt* state; for as its corruption is greater or less, the more or the less is its true character *visible.*

Before we close the chapter, we may examine into the question, whether the church is *infallible?* To this we reply by the three following assertions; that the apostles acting under divine direction were infallible, that after the apostles no individual believer, nor any assembly of the church, has been free from error, since the church in

its militant state is subject to various errors, as well as sins, and that there is no particular visible communion, which may not essentially err in faith and conduct, in questions of doctrine and practice. The *first* assertion needs no proof; the *second* is proved from the imperfection of our knowledge and regeneration; for "we know in part," whereas infallibility supposes the perfect knowledge of all things; the *third* is proved from the experience of all ages; thus the Jewish church erred, when Aaron made the golden calf, and built an altar before it, (Exod. xxxii. 2—5;) and also when, after Joshua's death, it "forsook the Lord, and served Baal." (Judges ii. 13.) Thus the synagogue erred in the time of Christ, when it condemned Christ; and it was even predicted that the church should err "in the last times," (2 Thess. ii. 9—11; 1 Tim. iv. 1; 2 Peter ii. 1,) and therefore the faithful are enjoined to "try the spirits;" (1 John iv. 1; 1 Thess. v. 21;) which would not be the case, had infallibility been given to the church. But here let it be observed, that a distinction must be made between the faithful themselves, and the visible communion; there is no visible communion which cannot err essentially, but an individual believer cannot fall into such errors as destroy the nature and essence of true faith, and hinder salvation, because he cannot fall away from true faith; he may fall into errors, and sometimes very pernicious errors; but he does not continue in them, not because it is impossible, as far as he himself is concerned, but because God does not "suffer him to be tempted above that he is able."

If it also be inquired, whether the church can *utterly fail* or *be lost*, we reply, that this or that particular visible communion may fail, since God sometimes threatens that he will "remove the candlestick;" (Rev. ii. 5,) but that the whole church cannot altogether be lost, so that there should be no church. This is evident from the *divine promises*, by which it is engaged that "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it," (Matt. xvi. 18.) from the *nature of the covenant of grace*, which God hath made with the church, and which is eternal, and never to be abrogated, (Isaiah lix. 21; Jer. xxxi. 35, 36; xxxii. 40; Psalm lxxxix. 28, 29.) from the *nature of the church itself*, which is the body of Christ, and which, therefore, cannot be separated from him since the head cannot be without the body; it is also the spouse of Christ, whom

he hath married for ever; the *kingdom* of Christ, which cannot be overturned or destroyed. (Dan. ii. 44.)

CHAPTER V.

OF THE MARKS OF THE TRUE CHURCH.

We have said that we may ascertain *where the true church* is; now, therefore, we must examine into the *marks*, first premising, that by these *marks* we mean certain outward signs cognizable by the senses, by which we arrive at the knowledge of the secret or inward thing; and that two things are required to constitute a *mark*, viz. that it be particular, and that it be more known than the thing of which it is a mark or sign. We must also premise, that we are not treating of the marks by which believers may be discerned from hypocrites, but of the marks by which we may ascertain whether there be any real communion to which we may unite ourselves; neither are we speaking of the marks of the Christian church at large, which is sufficiently distinguished from all other communities by its profession of Christianity, but of the marks of the true church among those assemblies which call themselves Christians. These things being premised, we say that the true marks of the church are the *pure preaching of the divine word*, the *lawful administration of the sacraments*, and *the exercise of discipline;* but especially the first of these, for the administration of the sacraments is not of equal necessity, since for a time it may be wanting; as was the case in the Israelitish church in the wilderness, when it was without circumcision. The same may be said of the exercise of discipline. Nor is it any objection to this view, that the dispensation of the word and sacraments constitutes the property, and the dowry as it were, of the church; both are true; as in earthly things the possession and the use of them is a mark of the transfer of the right, nor yet does the advantage cease to exist.

Now we prove that the preaching of the word is a mark of the true church, from various passages of scripture, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me," "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed," "He that is of God, heareth God's words." (John x. 27; viii. 31, 47.) Hence by this mark false churches are distinguished from the true; "whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God." "He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son." (2 John 9.) The same point is evident from this, that it is a mark peculiar to the church, and belongs only to the true church, for it is only the church which is the "house of God. the pillar and ground of the truth;" the church alone is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets;" it alone has the seals of the covenant. Of this mark heretics do indeed boast, but falsely. It is also further evident, because there is no other mark surer than what is derived from that which constitutes, preserves, and supports the church; but such is the preaching of the word, the removal of which draws the church after it. And such a mark is more known than the church, (one of the things mentioned above as being required to constitute a mark,) for although the church is more known to us than the scripture, as it regards a *confused* and *imperfect* knowledge, because it is the means of leading us to the scripture, and putting the scripture into our hands, yet the scripture is more known to us than the church, as it regards a *distinct* knowledge, because the true church cannot be distinctly and clearly known without the true and lawful preaching of the word. *Let us not hear*, says Augustine, *I say this, thou sayest this; but let us hear, Thus saith the Lord: Truly it is the Lord's book, whose authority we both acknowledge, and to which we both defer; in them let us seek the church, by them let us examine our claims.*

But here we may observe, that the church is so much the purer, as it possesses these marks more plainly: also, that there exists a certain latitude in these marks, so as to admit different degrees of purity, some being more, and others less perfect, which latitude, however, is not to be extended so far, as to tolerate fundamental errors, but only some trifling and unimportant errors. Further, that a church does not necessarily lose the name of a true church, if it is doctrinally erroneous in some point, and even if it is not perfectly pure. We do not notice

any other marks, for either they do not belong to the church, or else not always, or they are far more unknown than the church.

The true church cannot be ascertained from any *arrogant name* which it may assume to itself; for many have the title without the thing. *Every assembly of heretics*, says Lactantius, *boasts itself as exclusively Christian, and its church to be the Catholic church.* Neither can it be ascertained from its *antiquity*; antiquity does not always apply to the church, because in the beginning it was not ancient, and even the Pagans boast of this; but, as it is said, *antiquity or custom without truth is the antiquity of error:* besides that the knowledge of it depends upon the accurate tradition of successive ages. Neither from its *duration*, since this belongs to many false religions. Neither from its *multitude; for do we not hear*, says Athanasius, or rather Theodoret, *the Lord Jesus saying*, "Many are called, but few are chosen; strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it?" *who, therefore, had not rather be of the number of the few that are saved, than of the many who rush into destruction through the wide gate?* And besides, we know that Paganism, and Mahomedanism, in this respect, far exceed Christianity. Nor from the *continual succession of bishops*, for who does not know that the Arian bishops sometimes succeeded the orthodox, and that the Scribes and Pharisees sat in the chair of Moses? Nor from the *unity of the members;* for this belongs to many false religions; besides that unity may be hypocritical, and unconnected with truth of doctrine; there is such a thing as evil unity, which is nothing else but a destructive combination. Not from *miracles;* for false prophets make their boast of these, (Matt. vii. 22,) and every one knows that many frauds are practised in these cases. Lastly, not from *temporal prosperity;* for if the primitive church be tried by this mark, it will be proved to have been a false church.

CHAPTER VI.

OF THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH, AND OF ANTICHRIST.

The head of the church is Christ, as the whole scripture teaches; "the Father gave him to be the head over all things to the church." (Eph. i. 22; iv. 15, 16; Col. i. 18.) Christ possesses all the qualifications necessary for such a head. He leads, directs, and governs, all his members; he neither slumbereth nor sleepeth. He infuses into the members whatever vital motion they possess, and hence he is compared to a vine; (John xv. 9,) "of his fulness we receive, and grace for grace"—" he ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things." (John i. 16; Eph. iv. 10.) He exceeds all his members in dignity, and between him and them there is a most intimate union. Although Christ was always the head of the church, yet he was especially made so by his exaltation, when the Father "put all things under his feet."

Now there is no other head of the church upon earth. *First*, because the scripture mentions no other: Paul does indeed say that Christ "gave some apostles, others pastors," &c. (Eph. iv. 11,) but we no where read of his giving a head. *Secondly*, because, if this were the case, the church would be called the body of some other besides Christ. *Thirdly*, because it is impossible for the the church, scattered through the whole world, to be governed by a single mortal, who cannot be present in all places, nor act and hear of himself every thing that is any where done. Nor could a man question this, who is sensible of the weakness of human ability, and of the narrow limits and scanty resources of human wisdom, prudence, and judgment; and who at the same time considers the great and arduous office of governing the church. There was, indeed, under the Old Testament a high priest; but then the church was confined within the limits of Judea, whereas now it is spread through the whole world. This high priest also was never called the *head* and *ruler* of the other priests, (although he held precedency of them) and was equally subject to

the jurisdiction of the Sanhedrim. He was, moreover, a type of Christ our High Priest, but not of any morta. man.

Peter was by no means the head of the church, and of the other apostles. He was, indeed, the *chief* among the apostles, either from his *calling*, as having been the first called, or from his *age*, or his *gifts;* but that there was any authority given him over the other apostles, by which he was appointed governing priest, Christ's substitute, or head of the church, we utterly deny. For we read of no such superiority being conferred by Christ, or claimed by Peter himself, or recognised by the apostles. Besides, the apostolical office is the highest, and acknowledges no human superior. Peter himself was *commanded* by his colleagues to go into Samaria, Acts vii. 14. Paul himself testifies that he was no way inferior to the "chief of the apostles," (2 Cor. xi. 5; xii. 11,) and undertook to blame Peter (Gal. ii. 11). And Peter places himself in the same rank as the others, and forbids all domination in the church—"the elders among you I exhort, who am also an elder,—feed the flock of God, not by constraint, but willingly; neither as being *lords* over God's heritage," (1 Peter v. 1—3.) *The rest of the apostles*, says Cyprian, *were what Peter was, having an equal participation of honour and power.* The church was built, not upon the *person*, but upon the *doctrine* of Peter, or upon the "rock, Christ," than whom there is no other foundation, (1 Cor. iii. 11.)

The keys of the kingdom of heaven "were given" to Peter, (Matt. xvi. 19,) but they were keys, not of *dominion* or *authority*, which belong only to Christ, who "hath the key of David, who openeth, and no man shutteth," (Rev. iii. 7,)—but keys of ministry and *service*, or keys of *knowledge*, by which, through the preaching of the word, the treasures of heavenly mysteries are opened, and it is made manifest what is *loosed*, i. e. permitted, what is *bound*, i. e. forbidden; or else they were keys of *government and discipline*, by which heaven is opened to the penitent, and shut to the rebellious. But even if Peter had been the head of the church, which we by no means admit, it would not follow that this prerogative could be extended to others, because no one could succeed the apostles in their apostleship, nor do we any where read that Peter appointed any successor.

As to *antichrist*, this name is taken, sometimes for *any enemy* to Christ, as the apostle calls those, who denied either

the deity, or the incarnation of Christ, 1 John ii. 18—22, and sometimes for some particular or remarkable *enemy* to Christ, in which sense we here take it. The word *antichrist* denotes two things—an enemy and rival of Christ—and a substitute, or one who takes the place of Christ—as the preposition αντι (anti) may be explained, which sometimes means *opposition*, sometimes *substitution*. The coming of this Antichrist was predicted by Paul, 2 Thess. ii. and by John, Rev. xiii. 17, 18, under the form of a *whore* and a *beast;* and by the prophet Daniel under the type of *Antiochus Epiphanes*. Now antichrist is not one single person, but an order or succession of persons, occupying the same station; for Paul in his description of Antichrist asserts that the mystery of iniquity began to work in his own time, and would be completed at the end of the world; which could not be said of one person.

The following are the characters or marks of antichrist—*first*, with regard to the *place*, where he was to sit, the *general* place is "the temple of God," i. e. the church, not the temple of Jerusalem, but the Christian church. (2 Thess. ii. 4.) It is said that he "sitteth" there, because he assumes dominion and rule in the church. The *particular* place of antichrist is Babylon, the great city, with "its seven hills." *Secondly*, with regard to the time of antichrist being *revealed*, the scripture makes it the time when "that which now letteth is taken away," or removed, i. e. the dismemberment of the Roman empire,* (2 Thess. ii. 7, 8,) as the Greek scholia explain it, which make the thing which hindereth (τὸ κατέχον) to be the Roman empire. Now we may observe the chief steps by which the removal of this hindrance was effected, 1. When the seat of empire was transferred from ancient Rome to Constantinople; 2. When, by the division of the empire into Eastern and Western, the emperors of the West, having left Rome, placed their seat at Ravenna, or Milan, or were compelled to abdicate, A. D. 475, when Augustulus was conquered by Odoacer; 3. When the Greek emperors lost, through the acts of the popes, whatever power they had in Italy.

With respect to the person of Antichrist, his characters are, *apostasy*, 2 Thess. ii. 3; 1 Tim. iv. 1, 2; *opposition to Christ*, not open, as though he denies Christ, but secret; hence his apostasy is termed "the mystery

* This seems a better version than that given in our own Bible.

of iniquity;" *great pride*, by which he "exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped," (2 Thess. ii. 4;) *foul idolatry*, whence his seat is usually pointed out by the name of "harlot, and mother of harlots;" *miracles and lying wonders*, (2 Thess. ii. 9; Rev. xiii. 13;) *cruelty and violence*, (Rev. xiv. xviii.) Lastly the *number* and the *mark* of the beast is pointed out by John, (Rev. xiii. 16, 17.) Now Protestants maintain that all these marks and characters belong to the Roman pontiff: we need not enter into the proof of this assertion. We will only observe that it is ridiculous to understand by "that wicked," mentioned by Paul, 2 Thess. ii. 8, Simon Magus; as from the simple reading of the passage it is plain, that it means the same as the "man of sin," v. 3. It is absurd also by "the man of sin" to understand Caligula, since Caligula died before the time when Paul declared the man of sin would be revealed; and apostasy cannot be attributed to one who never acknowledged the true God. Nor is it less ridiculous to understand by the Antichrist, whom John mentions, Barchocab, who in the reign of the emperor Adrian declared himself the Messiah, and led away the Jews; for Barchocab did not apostatize from the faith, nor did he ever sit in the temple of God—not in the temple of Jerusalem, which had been then destroyed—not in the Christian church, for he did not recognise it as a church. It is also ridiculous to say, that the second beast, which John said was to come, is Apollonius Tyanæus, for he lived in the reign of Domitian before the death of John.

Antichrist may be regarded in his successive stages, as *conceived*, from the very times of the apostles, Satan even then preparing the way; also in the persecutions under Nero, and during the prevalence of several heresies; as *being born*, and "revealed" A. D. 606, under Boniface III.; as *growing up to maturity* from that period to the reign of Benedict IX. and Gregory VII., and from thence as *flourishing* in vigour to the period of the Reformation. For Boniface with great eagerness aspired to the title of *universal bishop*, which title Gregory I. had so abhorred, as boldly to declare, that he who calls himself, or desires to be called, Universal Bishop, was in his pride the forerunner of Antichrist; and every one knows that Gregory VII., called Hildebrand, reached such a pitch of audacity, as to say, that the Roman pontiff alone could use the imperial insignia; that all princes must kiss the feet of the pope only; that it was lawful for him to de-

pose kings; that his opinion ought not to be controverted by any one; that he could absolve the subjects of bad princes from their allegiance; and that the Roman pontiff alone could justly claim the title of 'Universal Bishop!'

CHAPTER VII.

OF THE MINISTERS OF THE CHURCH.

Having spoken of the *Head*, it remains that we should speak of the *ministers*, both of the Old and of the New Testament. With regard to the ministers of the Old Testament, before the law the *patriarchs* in their respective families presided in spiritual as well as in temporal matters. Under the law the *ordinary* ministers were the *Levites*, who were instead of the first born. Of these Levites, some were *priests*, others Levites, specially so called; both had a double office in relation to God and to men, and the presbytery (if we may so speak) was made up of both. Of the *priests* one was the chief or high priest, the rest inferior, whose office was to expound the law; to offer victims; to intercede for and to bless the people; to determine causes according to the divine law, to bear the ark of the covenant, to exhort soldiers, when they went out to battle, to valour, and to blow the trumpets. The Levites *specially so called* were the rest of Levi's posterity, destined to the service of God in the place of the first-born, and divided into three families, of whom we have spoken in another place.

The *extraordinary* ministers were the *prophets*, who, being immediately called by God, consulted him upon the general necessities of the church, as occasion required; interpreted the law; restored divine worship when fallen to decay; reproved the priests and princes; inveighed against the sins of the people; predicted future events; kept the church in expectation of the Messiah's coming, and gradually prepared his way. Various questions are raised concerning these prophets. I shall only touch upon two—*first*, it is inquired how the prophets ascertained a revelation to be divine. The reply is, they

discovered it from an unusual and unexpected brightness which shone around them, or from the majesty of the things revealed, and their accordance with the divine character. *Secondly*, it is inquired, how they proved their divine mission to others! We reply, they proved it by miracles, wrought by them, or else on their behalf; by strict holiness of life; by predicting events, which none could foresee, and which were fulfilled; by teaching nothing contrary to God's law, and by the truth of their doctrine. We refer any one who seeks further information, to the great divine, Witsius.

With respect to the ministers of the New Testament, some are *extraordinary*, others *ordinary;* the former were those whom Christ employed in laying the foundations of his church, after which their office was to cease. Such were the *apostles*, whose particular characteristics were, their immediate mission or calling from Christ himself; as also their immediate instruction—their being eye-witnesses of Christ's resurrection—their divine inspiration and infallibility, for they were "guided into *all* truth"—the universality of their office, i. e. their being sent to the whole world—the gift of miracles—their judicial and legislative power in the spiritual government of the church. Such were also *prophets;* (1 Cor. xii. 28; Eph. iv. 11,) by which title were designated certain persons, who were peculiarly gifted to explain the ancient scriptures; to interpret the prophecies; to clear up divine mysteries, and sometimes to foretel future events, (Acts xi. 27, 28; xxi. 10, 11.) To these prophets are added *evangelists*, who assisted the apostles in the care of the churches they had planted, and in confirming them in obedience to the faith, and were often their substitutes; —such were Mark, Luke, Philip, &c.

The *ordinary* ministers of the New Testament are *pastors*, who are called by various names, as *bishops*, *elders*, *overseers*, &c. to whom some add *teachers*, (Eph. iv. 11.) But whether the office of *teachers* was ordinary or extraordinary, whether the office of pastors and teachers was one and the same, or different, is a question. This is certain, that the scripture does not mention teachers, when it mentions ordinary ministers; (1 Tim. iii. 1, &c.,) and when it speaks of extraordinary ministers, it names teachers, and not bishops, (Eph. iv. 11; 1 Cor. xii. 28.) The institution of an *ordinary* ministry is proved from the following circumstances. The apostles every where appointed ordinary ministers over

each church, and commanded them to be appointed, (Acts xiv. 23; Tit. i. 5.) They are represented as appointed by God himself to feed the church: (Acts xx. 28,) and to them the apostles direct their epistles, (Phil. i. 11,) and intrust the charge of the church: (Acts xx. 17.) Rules are also prescribed, by which they are to be chosen in every age of the church.

Now every one must perceive the great advantage of the Christian ministry; its excellence no one will doubt, who considers that God is the author of it—that it handles the sublime mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, and is occupied about the souls of men—that it was exercised by Christ, the prophets, and apostles—and that it was instituted for the renovation, conversion, salvation, and happiness of mankind. For the qualifications of pastors we must consult Paul, (1 Tim. iii., &c.,) as also for the obedience, honour, and love, which the people owe to them, (Heb. xiii. 7, 17.) Here, however, be it observed, that they must not be listened to, when they depart from the doctrine of Christ; nay, Paul pronounces them "accursed," when so departing. (Gal. i. 8, 9.) The faithful must not be united with pastors, except *in* Christ and *for* Christ; as often therefore as the latter are separated from Christ, the former must separate from them.

To exercise the office of the ministry, *a call* is necessary. "No man taketh this honour to himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron," (Heb. v. 4.) "How shall they preach, except they be sent?" (Rom. x. 15.) Hence the scripture severely reproves those who have not been called of God, and who come in their own name, not in that of Christ, (Jer. xxiii. 21, 22; John v. 43.) This calling is necessary, both to comply with the command of God, and that the hearers, being persuaded of the lawful calling of their pastors, may more readily listen to their instructions; and also that the pastors, being assured of their calling, may not doubt that God is pleased to use their instrumentality, and may expect his blessing. All Christians, indeed, are bound to teach, from love, and from their general calling as Christians, but none can teach publicly and authoritatively, except he be called. Now this calling is *internal* and *external.* By the former we mean the inclination of the mind to undertake the office, the heart being stirred up by God to devote itself to the work of the ministry. The latter is that by which a man thus inwardly disposed is expressly called to exercise the office. *Outward* calling is

either *immediate*, i. e. which is given by God without the interposition of man; or *mediate*, which takes place through human agency. It is also *ordinary* or *extraordinary*. The ordinary is that which usually takes place by common means; the extraordinary is that which not only proceeds immediately from God without human agency, as the calling of Paul and the other apostles, but also that which takes place without the regular order being observed—that which takes place for the preaching of a thing unknown before, as the calling of Moses—that which has respect to an office entirely new, as the calling of John the Baptist—that which is accompanied by extraordinary gifts, which however is with less propriety termed an extraordinary calling.

These distinctions being laid down, several questions must be determined. The *first* is, whether a calling to the ministry by other pastors is absolutely necessary? The answer is, that in a well-ordered condition of the church it is necessary; but that in a troubled and corrupt condition it is not always necessary, since the church needs reformation; for then the faithful can take the place of pastors; which is evident, not merely because necessity makes many things lawful which otherwise are not so; as in a commonwealth, when the rulers and governors prove traitors, a private citizen may assume the reins of government—but also because every Christian is bound to embrace and defend the truth, to reject error, and to seek the salvation of his neighbour. Now this necessity becomes urgent, when the public ministry, which ought to answer the above ends, is not yet established, or, if established, is so corrupt, that error is taught instead of truth; for in this case it is lawful for any individual to provide not only for his own salvation, but also with all his care for that of his neighbour. This is confirmed by many examples, especially of those mentioned in Acts viii. 4, who being "scattered" by persecution, preached the gospel "every where;" such as also were the "men of Cyprus and Cyrene," mentioned in Acts xi. 20, 21. Such also were the young men Ædesius and Frumentius, who, having sailed to the Indies, preached the gospel, and established public worship; and that captive woman, who converted the Iberians to Christ, having first brought the queen over to the faith, and through her the king; who, seeking the conversion of the whole nation, became the apostle of his country, according to Ruffinus; and also the Christians of Samo-

sata, who being deserted by their pastors, took upon themselves the pastoral office. The point is further evident from considering that, if this were not so, it would be possible for the people to remain without godly pastors, and thus true religion would come to an end. In such cases of necessity, it is no more proper to demand by what right and authority such a thing is done, than to demand from a citizen, what authority he has for resisting the invasion of an enemy, if his rulers should prove treacherous; in short, it would be as ridiculous, as if any one were to demand of me, what right I have to obey God, to resist Satan, and seek the salvation of my neighbours. Nor is there any fear, lest by this means a wide door should be opened to confusion, and to all kinds of tumult; for that only is to be called confusion, which rashly and without cause neglects a regularly established order, not that which is compelled to dispense with it by an invincible and inevitable necessity.

The *second* question raised is, to whom the right of calling belongs? The reply is, the right of calling originally and essentially belongs to the church, to whom Christ has intrusted it; but it is exercised by the *rulers* in the name of the church, just as in a republic the power of creating magistrates is vested in the body of the community, which forms the republic, and the appointment is made in the name of the community by him who is delegated for that purpose. We observe, moreover, that, as we see in the church three orders of men, *pastors*, *magistrates*, and *people*, to the first belongs the right of examining those who are called, of choosing and ordaining; to the second, as being the superior members of the church, the right of approving or rejecting those who are chosen by the pastors; to the third, the right of assenting or not assenting, of admitting or rejecting. Now that this power of calling ministers belongs to the church, is proved by the following arguments: *First*, the church possesses the same right which all other societies have, of setting over them some persons to govern them, to enact laws, and to provide for their observance, to the good of the whole community. Again, God having bestowed faith and piety on the church, has thereby bound it, not only to persevere in the exercise of these graces to the end, and to maintain them against error and the wiles of Satan, but also to strengthen and increase them in every possible way, and to bring others within its pale. Now God could not

have obliged the church to these duties, without having given it the power to constitute a ministry, which is the lawful and proper means of accomplishing such ends for it is not possible that God, who never fails in what is necessary, should not have given the church sufficient authority to employ all the means necessary for its own preservation. Finally, it is evident from the practice of the apostles and the primitive church, in which there was no calling to the ministry without the consent of the church, (Acts i. 23; vi. 3, 6; xiv. 23.) And it is confirmed by the decrees of ancient councils, and among others by those of the council of Nice. In a synodical epistle found in Theodoret, we read thus: *If any prelate of the church shall die, it shall be lawful for those who have been received a little before, to succeed the deceased, provided they shall be found worthy, and be chosen by the people.* To this may be added many passages from the Fathers. Thus Cyprian in his epistle to the clergy: *The people themselves have the power either of choosing worthy priests, or of rejecting unworthy, which power seems of divine origin, that the priest should be openly chosen in the presence of the people, and by public judgment and testimony be pronounced worthy and fit for his office.* And in another epistle he confirms this, from the example of Cornelius, a Roman bishop: *He was made a bishop by the judgment of God and Christ; by the agreement of almost the whole clergy; by the suffrages of the people who were present at the time; and by the assembly of venerable priests and good men.*

The *third* question is, whether the church, having once entrusted to the presbytery its own right of calling pastors, hath then entirely given up that right, so as to be no longer able to use it? We answer, that the church has so entrusted its right to the rulers of churches, as at the same time to reserve for itself what originally is its own. So far is the church from having deprived itself of its right, that on the contrary it cannot possibly do so. In civil society, where the question is merely concerning temporal possessions, there is no obstacle to the people absolutely resigning their own right in order to avoid anarchy; but in the church, where the question is concerning salvation, the faithful cannot, without a crime, absolutely divest themselves of that power which they possess over the means given them to advance their salvation, such as the ministry is; which power they have, in order that pastors may not abuse

the ministry, and instead of true doctrine, teach and perpetuate error. Where, therefore, the church has no pastors, or where the pastors are very corrupt, and will not reform abuses, the church can then confer the ministerial call; nor does the call cease to be sufficient to all essential purposes, without pastors, even although there is no use made of the rites and ceremonies of calling, which after all do not essentially belong to it; for the essence of the call consists in the threefold consent of *God*, the *church*, and the *person called;* of God, because the person called must speak in his name; of the church, because it must be instructed and ruled; of the called himself, who has to fulfil the duties of his office.

Calling is followed by *ordination*, by which the person chosen and approved, is with due form and solemnity admitted into his office, and dedicated to the service of the church. The election of pastors was formerly made by the lifting up of the hands of the whole people, who, when they heard the name of the candidate proposed, signified their consent by this action. Ordination was then performed by some of the pastors with "imposition of hands," (1 Tim. iv. 14,) a form used by the Jews in the creation of their doctors. Now ordination must be preceded by an examination of the doctrine and life of the candidates, and care must be taken that each one be "apt to teach;" that he be free from those faults which would disgrace so honourable an office; and that he be furnished with those virtues by which he may exercise his ministry with advantage. This examination was carefully instituted by the ancients: the name of the candidate was usually written on a tablet, and set up to public view, and where this was not the custom, it was publicly announced in the congregation; so that, if any fault or scandal were discovered in the candidate, it might be laid before the presbytery on a day appointed; and this was the custom, not only with regard to presbyters, but also to deacons.

That Christian pastors are entitled to pecuniary support, is evident from the plain testimony of Paul, (1 Cor. ix. 4, 5—19,) and from Christ's own declaration that "the labourer is worthy of his hire," (Matt. x. 10; Luke x. 7,) and also from the threats addressed to those who refuse such support. (Mal. iii. 8, 9. Gal. vi. 6, 7.) It is evident also from the support afforded to the ministers under the Old Testament. (Num. xviii. 8—12.) They were commonly allowed a portion of the sacrifices, the

tenths, the first fruits, and other things of that sort, beside certain cities and lands assigned to them. Nor is it less evident from natural justice and equity; for is it not just, that they who are taught should support their teachers and impart their carnal things to those who deliver unto them spiritual things? It is of little consequence from what sources this pecuniary support is furnished, provided it be not on the one hand so unreasonably scanty, as to be insufficient for the decent support of the pastor and his family, nor, on the other hand, so ample, as to minister to pomp and luxury. Of ecclesiastical property I will not here speak; it is certain, that after the apostolic times, every church had its treasury, into which any one might throw his mite, as appears from Justin and Tertullian. In the course of time the church began to possess lands and estates, by the liberal grants of emperors and kings.

It is by no means required, that Christian pastors should be unmarried. The same necessity is imposed upon them, as upon all others who have not the gift of continency. Paul has declared that a bishop may be the husband of one wife, and it is said that marriage is honourable in all. (Heb. xiii. 4.) In the Jewish church not only the priests, but some of the most excellent of the prophets, had wives, (Isaiah viii. 3.) Some of the apostles, also, were married, and likewise many bishops and pastors afterwards. With regard to *elders* and *deacons*, we may observe, that the former are a second class of church officers, who have not the right to preach, but who maintain ecclesiastical discipline in conjunction with the pastors; their office being to support the weak, to encourage the timid, to admonish the disorderly, and to cite the disobedient before the presbytery. Paul alludes to them in 1 Tim. v. 17, as some persons have thought; as for ourselves, we do not think so; pastors are there meant, and it is doubtful, whether the office of *elder* was instituted in the time of the apostles.* *Deacons* are those who have the charge of collecting and distributing the relief due to the poor; we read of their appointment in Acts vi., and their qualifications, 1 Tim. iii. 8—10.

* [For the evidence in favour of the office of Ruling Elders from the New Testament, see Chapter III., of Dr. Miller's "Essay on the Warrant, Nature, and Duties of the office of Ruling Elders," published by the Presbyterian Board of Publication.]

CHAPTER VIII.

OF THE POWER OF THE CHURCH.

THAT there is some power and authority given to the church, is evident, *first*, because "the keys of the kingdom of heaven are given to it," which keys are the ensign of authority, either supreme, or subordinate. For the grant of the keys not only refers to the preaching of the word, but also to the exercise of discipline, since by these keys pastors have the power of forgiving or retaining sins. *Secondly*, because that authority cannot be denied to the church, which is granted to all other communities; now no community can be held together and continue without some government, and government cannot exist without some power. *Thirdly*, the point is evident from the titles given to pastors, (1 Thess. v. 12. 1 Tim. v. 17. Heb. xiii. 17.) But this *ecclesiastical* is very different from *political* power. Political power may be in the hands of heathens, and may be exercised by women; but not so ecclesiastical; political power is *autocratical*, as that of lords or rulers; ecclesiastical power is *ministerial*, as that of stewards; the one is principally concerned with *civil*, the other with *spiritual* matters; the former is exercised in a political manner, by the infliction of *bodily* punishments, the latter in a spiritual manner, by the *sword of the Spirit*; the one reaches only to the *outward man*, the other to the *conscience*. This power is vested in the pastors, not in the magistrate, nor is it derived from the latter to the former, as is evident, because otherwise "the keys" would have been given to the magistrate;—because the magistrate himself is subject to ecclesiastical power; and because otherwise the ministers would be the ministers of the magistrate, and not the "ministers of Christ."

Now this power is exercised, *first*, in regard to doctrines or matters of faith, not as though the church stamped authority upon the divine word, and made any new doctrines, or interpreted the scripture according to its own pleasure, but inasmuch as it guards the scripture, as a sacred deposit, and vindicates it against all

attacks, but especially as it frames creeds and confessions for the preservation of sound doctrine and ecclesiastical union. There is great authority belonging to such confessions, although far inferior to the authority of scripture, because men may be mistaken in them; and therefore they are of force or obligation only as far as they are discovered to agree with the word of God. Again, the power of the church consists in its having the right of making laws and constitutions for the maintenance of order. The pastors indeed have not the right of framing laws properly so called, which bind the conscience; for there is one lawgiver, namely God, who alone has power over the conscience; nor is it lawful to add any thing to the divine law, nor to take any thing from it; but they have the right of making rules and constitutions for the maintenance of good order, in things which are indifferent; as those which regard the time, place, and form of public prayers, preaching, and administration of the sacraments; because, though God hath given a general injunction, that "all things be done decently and in order," (1 Cor. xiv. 40,) yet he has not laid down any particulars, but has left them to the wisdom and discretion of his ministers. These laws and constitutions are to be observed for the preservation of order, yet they do not bind beyond a case of scandal and contempt; but pastors ought to take care that they do not go beyond things indifferent, nor burden the church with too great a number of canons. Once more, the power of the church is employed about the exercise of discipline, by which openly notorious sinners are admonished and reproved for their errors of doctrine or conduct; and, after the public and private admonitions of the church have been despised and rejected, are by the authority and order of the ministers assembled, excluded from religious ordinances, and if they persist in the contumacy, are at length, in the name of God, pronounced excluded from the communion of the church, until by true repentance they be reconciled to God, and the church.

There are, therefore, two parts of discipline, *correction* and *excommunication;* which latter is also of two kinds, the *lesser*, and the *greater*. The *lesser* excommunication is that, whereby offenders are for a time excluded from the Lord's supper, until the public scandal given be removed. These were called by the ancients *abstenti* (*kept back*.) The *greater* excommunication is

that, whereby an obstinate sinner is cast out of the church, and is cut off as it were with the spiritual sword, as a corrupt member from the body, that might otherwise injure the unaffected parts. Now the exercise of discipline is necessary; for no society can subsist without it, and the design of it is, that the gospel be not exposed to reproach; that the good be not corrupted by intercourse with the bad; that sinners may be ashamed, and stirred up to amendment. That the church has this power of excommunication, is proved from the following arguments. All well-ordered societies have a right to separate from their company troublesome and dangerous persons. Under the Old Testament, circumcised persons who had become ceremonially unclean, and those also who were guilty of any crime, were excluded from the holy assemblies; hence so frequent mention is made of those who were "put out of the synagogue" for following Christ, (John ix. 22.) It was also the practice of the apostles, and of Paul, (1 Cor. v. 3—6,) not to mention those passages in which we are commanded to "reject an heretic," to "avoid those who cause divisions and offences," to have "no company with them." (Titus iii. 10. Rom. xvi. 17. 1 Cor. v. 11. 2 Thess. iii. 14) to which may be added, Matt. vii. 6, where our Saviour forbids "that which is holy to be given to dogs." Nor should any one be a partaker of the eucharist, who is unworthy, lest he fall into condemnation. The practice also of the early church proves the same things; many things relating to this practice may be read in Cyprian.

Here it will be necessary to observe a few things: *first*, the objects of excommunication must be *men*, not *beasts*; the *living*, not the *dead*; the *professors of Christianity*, not *heathens* or *aliens*. *Secondly*, in the exercise of discipline, the extremes of severity and indulgence should be avoided, nor should extremities be resorted to, except by degrees. *Thirdly*, regard should be had to *persons*, to *age*, and to the *offences* themselves; to *persons*, for some are of an obstinate temper, others more readily acknowledge their faults; those of a servile disposition are to be treated severely, those of a more ingenuous temper, mildly;—to *age*, for the aged must be dealt with in one way, the young in another; (1 Tim. v. 1,)—to the *offences* themselves, some of which are committed privately, and must be reproved privately; others publicly, and must be reproved "before all." (1 Tim. v. 12.) *Fourthly*, excommunication does not

break those natural and moral ties which join men together, nor does it extend to the taking away of property or life; it does not depose princes, and, therefore, Theodosius was never deprived of his kingdom; it does not release children from the obedience due to their parents, nor married persons from their conjugal duties; nor does it deprive the rich of their possessions. *Lastly*, excommunication is not an expulsion from the *mystical* body of Christ, from which no man can be cut off; nor does it last any longer than the impenitence of the offending subject.

CHAPTER IX.

OF CHURCH SYNODS AND COUNCILS.

Although every church is free and independent by divine right, yet it is profitable for several churches to be united by mutual agreement, to avoid the common danger, and that the whole body may assist any part which is in need, to cultivate spiritual communion, and to destroy heresies. For this union a precedent has been established by the apostles themselves, who assembled together, (Acts xv); and this example was followed by the church in the establishment of synods and councils; for, notwithstanding the observation of Gregory Nazianzen, that he shunned all conventions of bishops; because he had never witnessed a good and successful termination of any synod, it is certain, that councils may be of very great service.

Now the right of proclaiming councils belongs to the church, which has authority to order every thing that tends to its own preservation; but, since synods and councils cannot be convened except by authority, the authority must more particularly belong to those who are the chief members of the church, and whom God appoints as guardians over the church; such as kings and magistrates, to whom belongs the power of appointing the place and time of these assemblies, giving safe conduct to strangers, furnishing the expenses, preventing violence, confirming by their authority decrees lawfully

made, and inflicting penalties on the disobedient.* Such was the practice under the Old Testament, as appears from the examples of David, Solomon, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, and Josiah, and under the New Testament, from the examples of Constantine the Great, Theodosius I. Theodosius II. Marcian, and Justinian, who called together, respectively, the councils of Nice, Constantinople, Ephesus, Chalcedon, and the second of Constantinople. If it be inquired, what authority these councils have, we reply, an authority far beneath that of scripture; nor can their decisions bind the conscience any further, than they appear to be consistent with the word of God. To elucidate this more fully, it must be observed, that councils are concerned with three things—doctrines or matters of faith, canons or constitutions of government, and exercise of discipline. With respect to the first, the decrees of councils may be regarded in the same light as the maxims of wise men, who are able to discuss any thing maturely and deliberately. With respect to the second, they are directions, possessing the power of enacting or establishing what is expedient. With respect to the third, they are judges appointed by the church to punish offenders.

But although the authority of councils is of great weight, since there is no appeal from them; yet it must be considered, that those only are lawful councils, which are convened by those who have the power to do so; and in which godly men, assembled in the name of Christ, determine nothing concerning the matters in dispute without honest and thorough deliberation, free from all evil affections and motives, in strict accordance with the word of God. Hence Constantine thus addressed the Nicene fathers: *The evangelical and apostolical men, and the oracles of the ancient prophets, clearly instruct us what we ought to seek from God. Having, therefore, laid aside contention, which is the cause of disagreement and war, we will receive from the divinely inspired word the solution of those questions which are before us.* We may also observe, that there has never been a *universal* council, although many were called such, as being convened from all parts of the Roman empire; because those councils were convened by the Roman emperors, who sent their imperial letters only to the bishops who were under their government, furnish-

* This is very doubtful.—[Ed. Pres. Board.]

ing them with the expenses of their journey, &c. For it is not credible, that the emperors wrote to any bishops who lived under a foreign government. And after the fall of the western, and in the decline of the eastern empire, councils continued to be convened, which were called universal, although they were not attended by delegates from Gaul, Spain, or Britain. Lastly, be it observed, that no councils ever possessed infallibility; and that several have grievously erred.

CHAPTER X.

OF MAGISTRATES.

Having spoken of *ecclesiastical*, we must offer a few remarks on *political* government, and upon the magistracy, concerning which the first inquiry is, whether this government is of divine institution? Now this is proved from Prov. viii. 15, "By me kings reign, and princes decree justice," "He removeth kings, and setteth up kings." (Dan. ii. 21.) "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God." (Rom. xiii. 1.) The heathens were of the same opinion, who said, Ἐκ δε Διος βασιλῆες, *kings are from Jupiter*. This institution has not been abolished by the Christian religion, and therefore we never read of any magistrates, after they believed in Christ, having given up their office. Another inquiry is, what are the duties of the magistracy? we reply, to enact just and equitable laws, and to guard them with penalties proportioned to the offence; to administer justice according to the laws, by rewarding the good, and by punishing the bad; taking care, however, not to judge under the influence of any passion, such as anger or hatred, or without an accurate knowledge of each case; to exact oaths for the purpose of eliciting the truth; to carry on war, not with the design of extending their territories, but for the just defence of themselves and their subjects, for the avenging of the

public wrongs, and also for the recovery of that which has been forcibly taken away; and, finally, to form alliances with foreign nations, even with unbelievers.

Now the office of the magistrate has to do not only with civil, but also with spiritual things; hence the keeping of the divine law is intrusted to them, (Deut. xvii. 18,) and they are called "nursing fathers" of the church, "shepherds, fathers;" (Isaiah xlix. 23; xliv. 28; 1 Sam. xxiv. 11,) and not without reason, for they are bound to provide for all things that relate to the happiness of their subjects, which has been always done by godly princes, such as David, Solomon, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, Josiah. And in later times, Constantine, in an epistle to the church after the council of Nice, thus declared: *I have considered it my duty to endeavour, before all things, that one faith be observed in the church, sincere charity among the people, and unvarying piety towards God, the author of all things.* The same prince, according to Eusebius, also said, that the pastors were appointed overseers of the *internal*, but that he was appointed overseer of the *external* things of the church. Honorius declared, that *among the vast cases of his government, regard for the Christian religion was the chief, and almost the only one.* And Theodosius is commended by Ambrose, because, towards the close of his life, he took better care of the church than of the empire.

But the authority of the magistrate in religious matters is not absolute, but limited, and is very different from that of pastors. For, *first*, he cannot make new articles of faith. *Secondly*, he cannot force the conscience. Maximilianus Cæsar said, that *to wish to bear rule over consciences, was to invade the citadel of heaven*; and justly, for God alone has authority over the conscience. Paul does indeed say, that we must submit to the magistrate "for conscience' sake," (Rom. xiii. 5;) but his meaning is, that we must obey governors, not merely from fear of punishment, but also that we may act agreeably to the dictates of conscience, which commands us to submit to the powers that be according to the ordinance of God. *Thirdly*, the magistrates cannot preach the word, nor administer the sacraments. *Fourthly*, he cannot exercise church discipline. *Lastly*, he cannot enjoin the ministers to do any thing inconsistent with the rules of the ministry. But on the contrary, the civil magistrate is bound to set up the pure doctrine and worship of God; to preserve them when set up, and to

restore them when fallen to decay; to place suitable teachers over schools and academies; to defend the church to the utmost of his power; to allow pecuniary support to ministers of religion; to take care that each minister discharges his duty; to restrain the disturbers of the church's peace; to build places of worship; to convene synods and assemblies; to sanction, by his authority, ecclesiastical laws, and to prevent the profanation of the holy Sabbath.

It is the duty of the people to respect and obey the magistrate, in all things which do not infringe on their consciences; to pay him tribute; and to pray for him. Such was the practice of the early Christians. *Looking up to heaven*, says Tertullian, *with hands stretched out, because they are innocent, with head bare, because we are not ashamed, in short, without any adviser, because it is from our own breasts, we all continually pray, at all times, in behalf of all our governors, that God would grant them a long life, a secure government, a safe home, powerful armies, a faithful senate, a good people, and a peaceable world around them.* No one is exempt from this obedience to magistrates, not even the clergy; which is evident from Rom. xiii. 1, already quoted, "Let *every* soul be subject," &c. It is evident also from the example of the priests under the Old Testament, and from the testimony of the Roman pontiff, Gregory I., calling the Emperor *his Lord*, and himself his *unworthy servant;* also from the constitutions and edicts of the Emperors, as appears from various documents, by which the clergy were subjected to the laws of the state. But although they are thus subject in civil and criminal matters, yet it is fit that princes and magistrates should grant them certain privileges, such as exemption from those personal burdens, which cannot be imposed without hindering the exercise of their sacred office, and detracting somewhat from its dignity, as, for instance, to serve as *soldiers*, and also exemption from certain taxes; thus the Egyptian priests were exempted by Joseph, (Gen. xlvii. 22,) and the Jewish priests by Artaxerxes, (Ezra vii. 24.) Thus far as to the Magistracy.

CHAPTER XI.

OF MARRIAGE.

SINCE *marriage* was instituted for the purpose of propagating the church, we must say a little about it. This relation was established by God soon after the creation, during the state of innocence in the earthly paradise, (Gen. ii.;) it was sanctioned by laws, and consecrated by a blessing; and Christ, the restorer of corrupt nature, adorned the nuptial rites with his presence and first miracle, (John ii.) Matrimony, therefore, is the lawful union of one man and one woman, capable of forming such union, into one flesh, by full, proper, and mutual consent. The design of it is threefold—the procreation of children, as the nursery of the church and commonwealth—mutual help and assistance—and a remedy for concupiscence. Without marriage the human race could not be propagated; the church increased; fornication be avoided; nor the number of the elect be completed. For lawful matrimony these things are required—that they who wish to contract, be able to do so, being of suitable age—that there be mutual consent—that that consent be not contrary to God's word, the law of nature, and the wise constitutions of the state; not extorted by violence or fear, nor declared in deceitful words; nor given by one mad or intoxicated; nor clandestine, or against the wishes of parents. For if a promise or a vow made to God does not stand good, if disallowed by a parent, (Num. xxx. 3, 5,) how much less an agreement made between a youth and a damsel? Unless it be perceived, that the parents, being of unsound mind, wish to prevent what is lawful; in which case, the matter must be decided by the ecclesiastical assembly.

Marriage must not be contracted between those who are "too near of kin" to each other. (Lev. xviii. 6.) There must be no connexion between a daughter and her father, or between a son and his mother. (Lev. xviii. 7.) Natural shame, common to all men, forbids a conjunction of this nature. There must be none also between a stepson and his step-mother, or a step-daughter and her step-

father, (ver. 8,) because the step-mother is one flesh with the father. Paul tells us that even the heathen abhorred such marriages, as incestuous, (1 Cor. v. 1.) Hence Antonius Caracalla was marked with infamy by the Romans, for having first dared to marry his step-mother, according to Spartian. There must be none between brothers and sisters, whether born of both parents, or brothers or sisters by one parent only. But here a question arises—whether a marriage between brothers and sisters is forbidden by the law of nature? This does not seem to be the case, since at the beginning of the world, of necessity, and by the ordinance of God, marriages must have been contracted between the children of our first parents; but the question is solved, if we duly consider, with Heidegger, and other divines, that a distinction must be made between what absolutely belongs to natural law, and what belongs to it under a certain state of things. A union between brothers and sisters, is not contrary to natural law *absolutely;* for, were this the case, God would not have sanctioned it, but it is contrary to it under a certain state of things, i. e. after the increase and multiplication of mankind. There can be also no marriage with the daughter of one's own son, or the daughter of one's daughter; (v. 10;) none with the daughter of a father's wife, begotten of that father; none with one's aunt or uncle, whether by the father or the mother's side; (v. 11—14;) none also with a daughter-in-law, or son's wife, (v. 15.) There must also be none with a brother's wife, or sister's husband, (v. 16;) nor must we oppose to this the law mentioned in Deut. xxv. 5, for if these words be understood of the real brother of the deceased, as the Jews understood it, which is plain from Matt. xxii. 24—26; and if this custom was observed after the law was given, as it is certain it was observed before Moses, from the instance of Judah marrying the widow of his first-born deceased to Onan, (Gen. xxxviii. 8,) then there is no doubt, that God made this exception to the law for certain reasons, which were to be of force only before the Messiah's coming. Other prohibited degrees the scripture does not mention, but we think it free to the supreme civil authorities to forbid other degrees, besides those divinely forbidden. Thus the emperors Theodosius and Arcadius prohibited the marriage of cousins. Though it must be remarked, that these prohibitions are not to be placed on the same footing as divine laws, as if they

were additions to them; but they are only the free safeguards of civil society, which do not of themselves bind the conscience, and may be easily rescinded. Care also must be taken, that interdicts of this nature be not carried to too great an extent.

Now matrimony is an indissoluble bond, which cannot be broken, except by the adultery of one of the parties. Thus Christ says, "Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her that is put away, doth commit adultery," (Matt. xix. 9.) Our Saviour thus reproves the Jews, who divorced their wives for the most trifling causes, such as over-boiling their food, according to Hillel; or when a more beautiful wife could be obtained, according to Akibah. Most divines think that the marriage-bond is broken by wilful desertion, from Paul's words—"If the unbelieving depart, let him depart; a brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases," (1 Cor. vii. 15.) This passage, however, is differently explained by others: we give no decision. Other causes of divorce, although sanctioned by the authority of emperors, and defended by lawyers and advocates, we cannot admit,—such as, if a man be a sorcerer, a traitor, a murderer, if he be convicted of perjury, if he be a robber of sepulchres or churches, a thief, or receiver of thieves, &c. The causes also of divorce, which we read in ecclesiastical constitutions, we are equally slow to admit. It belongs not to man to relax a law which God has been pleased to make strict. Nor must it be said that marriage is merely a human contract; it is a mixed contract, having some things of human, some things of divine, authority: the authority of the magistrate may take from the former, not from the latter.

Every one may contract matrimony, who is of suitable age, and none ought to bind themselves with a snare, by vowing perpetual continence, since many examples prove that not even old age is beyond the danger of concupiscence, and "it is better to marry than to burn." (1 Cor. vii. 9.) And we doubt not, that those who have rashly and foolishly made such a vow, may, when they seriously repent of it, consider themselves free from its obligation, and are even bound so to consider themselves, if they feel that they "burn." *It is more tolerable,* says the Council of Toledo, *to break the vow that was foolishly made, than, by keeping a useless vow, to fill up*

the measure of dreadful crimes. Marriage is not a sacrament, for it has not the requisites of a sacrament, as will hereafter be shown. It is indeed surprising, that matrimony should be accounted a sacrament by those who believe it to be incompatible with that ordination, which they also account a sacrament. For if marriage contains a remedy for concupiscence, there appears no reason why it should be incompatible with this other sacrament, since the clergy need this remedy no less than other men. It is also strange that marriage should be a sacrament with those, who have so furiously inveighed against it; as Pope Siricius, praised by Innocent III., for applying to married people the words of Paul, "They that are in the flesh cannot please God." And thus we have spoken enough of matrimony.

CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY.

BOOK THE ELEVENTH.

OF THE SACRAMENTS.

CHAPTER I.

OF THE SACRAMENTS IN GENERAL.

SUCH is the goodness of God towards the church, that, not content with entering into a covenant of grace with it, he has condescended to confirm that covenant by the *sacraments*, as seals, for the greater faith of the church. Now the word sacrament, among writers in the ancient tongue, signifies, 1. *A pledge*, which those who had any litigation, deposited with the priest, on this condition, that the victor should bear away his money, while the vanquished left his with the priest. 2. *An oath*, which was not taken without invoking the holy name of God; but it is particularly employed to denote a military oath, by which the soldiers, after a certain form, and in prescribed words, pledged themselves to the commonwealth and to the magistrates that they would strenuously perform all that the general should command, and that they would not desert the standards. The word being transferred from military to sacred rites, is again used by ecclesiastical writers in different senses. The vulgate translation employs this term wherever the word μυστηριον (*mystery*) occurs. (Eph. iii. 9; v. 32. Col. i. 27. 1 Tim. iii. 16. Rev. i. 20; xvii. 7.) The term is also applied to any kind of signs which confirm a temporal promise, as to the *rainbow*. In the time of Tertullian all figures and allegories were called *sacraments*. At length it was em-

ployed to designate the seals of the covenant of grace; and very justly, because those who partake of the sacraments, thereby pledge and bind themselves by oath to God, and are called to a holy warfare; as Tertullian stated to the martyrs, *We were called to the service* (warfare) *of the living God, when we replied to the words of the sacrament;* or rather because those seals are in reality *holy and secret* things, signifying spiritual grace. But we must observe, that the word *sacrament* is sometimes taken for external rites and signs, at other times for the things signified; sometimes it comprehends both. With this word corresponds the Greek μυστήριον though it is never in scripture used to express a sacrament. The sacraments therefore may be defined—"The seals and signs of God's grace in Christ," or a little more plainly—"Sacred, visible, and divinely appointed signs and seals, to signify and to seal to our consciences the promises of grace in Christ, and to attest in return our own obedience towards God."

It appears then, that the *first* thing required to constitute a sacrament, is divine institution. God alone can ordain sacraments, for he only, who is the author of the covenant and promises of grace, can be the author of the seals of the covenant. *Secondly*, it is required that there should be *signs*, by which we understand not only *outward rites or ceremonial actions* on the part of the *minister* who is in the place of God, and on the part of *believers*, who receive these sacraments; but more particularly *external elements*. Observe, they are not *natural* signs, having of themselves the power of signifying what they do signify, as smoke is a sign of fire, but *divinely appointed* signs; having however some analogy or resemblance to what they signify. *For*, as Augustine says, *if they did not possess some analogy of this kind, they would not be sacraments.* They are signs which are consecrated to sacred uses by the word, and by prayer. Again, they are *visible* signs, not *audible;* otherwise they would be the same as the word. Further, they are not merely *accidents* but *substances;* because the analogy of the sign with the thing signified is derived from the nature of the sign and its properties. Moreover they are such signs as have the word accompanying them; hence Augustine says, *Let the word be added to the element, and it will become a sacrament.* The word determines the element, as in baptism the element is water, and these words, *I baptize thee*, deter-

mine the element of water to signify spiritual cleansing. Now of that which may be called the *sacramental word* there are two parts, the *command*, and the *promise:* by the former God commands the sacraments to be duly administered, and prescribes the form and proper use of them; by the latter is shown the thing signified, and the whole efficacy of the sacrament. Now the word ought to be uttered with a loud voice; otherwise, it would signify nothing, not being heard; besides, it was openly pronounced by Christ himself, and being the "word of faith," it must be proclaimed. Once more, they are signs of God's covenant: see Gen. xvii. 10, 11.

Thirdly, it is required that these signs should not only be signs commemorative of past events, but also signs sealing and setting forth present grace, and signifying future. This is evident from Paul's calling *circumcision* the sign and seal of faith, which must be applied, not only to Abraham, but also to all believers, whose father he was, since the promises of grace and of the righteousness of faith, of which circumcision was the seal, are common to all the faithful. It is evident also, from this consideration, that the sacraments stand related to the covenant of grace in the same way as other signs and seals which were added to a promise for the confirmation of it. Such was the relation of the rainbow to the promise which God made, that he would no more send a flood upon the earth; for the rainbow was not given merely to put us in remembrance of the deluge that was past, but to confirm our faith in the promise that there should be no deluge to come.

Fourthly, there must be in the sacraments the *thing signified*, and that is Christ, with all those blessings which faith applies; now the thing differs from the sign, in that the former is spiritual, the latter earthly, that the sign is presented to the senses, the thing to the soul; they differ also in the mode of communication, which is in the sign, corporeal, in the thing signified, spiritual.

Fifthly, there must be an analogy between the sign and the thing signified, in which analogy consists the proper union of the former with the latter; which union consists of three things—the *signification*, which depends on the resemblance there is between the sign and the thing signified—the *sealing*, by which, according to God's appointment, the outward symbols produce a greater faith in the thing promised, while however it is our faith, not God's word, which is supported by these symbols—

the *exhibition*, because God in the sacraments sets be fore the faithful what he promises. Now from this ana logy arise those forms of expression, by which the names of the signs and of the things signified are often exchanged for each other; as when Christ is called the *passover*, circumcision the *covenant*, the body of Christ *bread.*

From all that has been said it is plain, that the end of the sacraments is, the confirmation of the covenant of grace, and the sealing on God's part of our union with Christ, promised in that covenant, and of all his benefits; and at the same time on our part a solemn expression of our gratitude to God. This does not, however, prevent us from saying, that the sacraments were also instituted to be the badges of our public profession of religion and of divine worship, by which those who belong to the visible church are distinguished from other societies. To all these requisites of a sacrament, we must add this last, viz. that the use of it in the church must be stated and ordinary, so as to distinguish it from other things which have been used only for a time.

The *necessity* of the sacraments is not simple and absolute on the part of God, but hypothetical on our part; not that the word has any need of confirmation, but to assist our infirmity. God has therefore instituted the sacraments, 1. That he might provide for our weakness; because we are ignorant, and much influenced by sensible objects. 2. That our faith might be more and more strengthened; for although the faith, which is produced by the word, can be sustained by the word, yet it is hereby still more confirmed, because the word addresses men in general, but the sacraments are administered to individuals. Now though whatever is set forth to men in general ought to influence all, because no man is excluded, yet many are more powerfully influenced by whatever is presented to them individually; because thereby not only is no one excluded, but each one in particular is reminded that the thing presented belongs to him. And we know how true it is—

> Segnius irritant animos demissa per aurem,
> Quam quæ sunt oculis subjecta fidelibus.—Hor.

> *Things heard, do not before the mind arise*
> *So vivid, as when pictured to the eyes.*

The word affects only the *hearing*, the sacraments affect several of the senses together. 3. God has instituted

the sacraments, because he was pleased to do the same in his own covenant, as is daily done in the covenants of men, who, in their contracts with each other, usually attach their seals, on both sides, to the instruments containing their contracts.

From what has been said, we may easily infer the various relations which are between the word and the sacraments, and also the differences between them. Both have God for their Author, Christ for their foundation, and salvation for their end; but they differ as follows: the word is absolutely necessary, the sacraments only hypothetically; the word is heard, the sacraments are seen; the word produces faith, the sacraments confirm it; the word is promiscuously extended to all, the sacraments to believers only; the word profits without the sacraments, the sacraments do not without the word.

CHAPTER II.

OF THE EFFICACY OF THE SACRAMENTS.

WITH regard to the *efficacy* of the sacraments, we think that they do not produce grace, nor have any inherent power of conferring or bestowing it, but are only signs and seals, which, lawfully used, seal grace, and exhibit it to the faithful;—God by his Holy Spirit really working the power, and fulfilling in the faithful, whatsoever he promises and signifies by the signs; hence they have no efficacy except towards believers, for whose benefit they were appointed. Now we prove that the sacraments do not bestow grace, *first*, because grace is the effect of the Spirit only, *Remission of sins*, says Cyprian, *whether bestowed through baptism, or through the other sacraments, is peculiarly the work of the Holy Spirit, and with him alone abides the prerogative of bestowing such grace. Secondly*, because the sacraments would thus physically contain grace in them, or grace would be tied to the sacraments; which is absurd, for as many are saved *without*, so many are condemned *with*, the sacraments,—Simon Magus, for instance. *Thirdly*, be-

cause nothing that is corporeal has power to penetrate to the soul. *Fourthly*, because, if there were such inherent power, then the "washing away of the filth of the flesh" in baptism would "save" the baptized, contrary to the testimony of Peter, who declares that this does not save, but "the answer of a good conscience towards, God," (1 Peter iii. 21.)

That this subject may be properly understood, we observe in general, that the sacraments are signs, which set before our eyes the mysteries of our salvation—*seals*, which confirm to us God's promises—*pledges*, which assure us of God's grace, and fellowship with us—*earnests*, which confirm to us a title to eternal life—*marks*, which distinguish us from unbelievers. We therefore affirm, that the sacraments do not merely signify grace to us; for were this the case, the expressions used in scripture would be frigid; nay, if God had only instituted them for this end, he would have selected more lively and expressive signs than he has, and the symbols of the Old would far excel those of the New Testament, because they were more distinctive; the sacraments, therefore, are something more than significative. They are badges of our profession and signs of our warfare; baptism, for instance, being our entrance into the church, a ceremony by which we enlist under the banner of Christ, and bind ourselves to God; while he binds himself to us, promising us salvation, and we promising him obedience. They are also badges by which we recognize ourselves and our brethren, as children of the same family, members of the same body, soldiers of the same army. They are also seals, which confirm to us the promises of God, and this they do by making the thing present, as it were, to the mind, as far as a sign can do this; and by introducing it, (if such an expression may be allowed,) through a new door, i. e. the eyes, into the mind. This sealing also is effected by the application of God's promises to every particular believer. The promises of the gospel are general, and therefore less striking; but in the participation of the sacraments, God says to all those who rightly receive them, *Thy sins are forgiven thee;* this, therefore, is the seal and confirmation which renders the promises more certain. Moreover, they are exhibitory signs, setting before the faithful what is promised: now they do this in the same way, as a man is put into possession of a house by having the keys delivered to him; and as formerly bishops obtained

their investiture by the staff and ring given to them. The moment we receive the sacramental symbols in faith, the Holy Spirit, operating in an indescribable manner, strengthens faith: diffuses joy over the soul; gives the sense of sin forgiven, communion with God, adoption, and title to eternal life; increases hope, and adds a new degree of holiness. The sacraments, therefore, do not increase and confirm *faith*, by merely setting before us the objects which we are bound to believe; nor *love*, by merely showing how great is God's love towards us; but because the Holy Spirit accompanies them by his grace in all who rightly use them; hence the sacraments are said to *save* us; and hence baptism is called "the washing of regeneration."

But here it must be observed, that the sacraments confer no benefit upon unbelievers and hypocrites; nor even upon believers themselves, if they carelessly partake of them; that God often grants justifying grace before the participation of a sacrament, as is proved from the example of Abraham—that grace is attributed to the sacraments, either because God sometimes grants grace in the use of them, or because, as Vossius says, faith sees grace in the sacraments more clearly, lays hold of it more firmly, and retains it more surely. Observe also, that the word is to be preferred to the sacraments, both because the word generates faith, and also nourishes it, in adult persons, whereas the sacraments do not generate, but only nourish faith; and because we cannot be saved without the word, since he who believes not is condemned, and faith cometh by hearing; but we may be saved without the sacraments. *Lastly*, the sacraments cannot be despised without criminality, since, in so doing, we despise him who instituted them, and the grace which he offers in them.

With regard to those whose office it is to administer the sacraments, under the Old Testament they were allowed to be private or lay persons, by whom circumcision was administered; but the ministers of the New Testament are those only, to whom the right of teaching and preaching belongs, as we shall see hereafter. Now, although these ministers ought to be intent upon what is to be done, lest they should do what they ought not; yet we believe that the intention of ministers is not at all necessary to the essence of a sacrament. *First*, because the case is the same with a sacrament as with the preached word; now the efficacy of the latter does not

depend on the intention of the preacher. (Phil. i. 15—19.) *Secondly*, because in this way the operation of the sacrament would depend upon man. *Thirdly*, because then there would be no assurance given of the saving effect of the sacraments, and all true comfort would be taken away. *Fourthly*, because ministers are mere instruments, and we know that the letters patent of a sovereign are not of the less force, because his ministers, who affix their seals, have no intention of favouring those to whom such letters are granted. *It makes no difference*, says Augustine, *to the efficacy of what is sown or planted, whether it be done with clean or with dirty hands; provided the seed be good, and the soil fertile, and the heat of the sun, and rain from heaven, be not withheld.*

CHAPTER III.

OF THE SACRAMENTS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

THERE were two ordinary sacraments in the Old Testament church, viz. *circumcision* and the *passover*. Of the former, which consisted in the cutting off of the foreskin, as a token of God's covenant; there were two periods, one from Abraham to Moses, the other from Moses to Christ. Abraham first received circumcision in his ninety-ninth year, Gen. xvii. Afterwards, in the time of Moses, it became the public sacrament of the whole church, "Moses gave you circumcision, not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers;" (John vii. 22.) This circumcision was a sign of the covenant made by God with Abraham and his seed. (Gen. xvii. 7.) It sealed the remission of sins; it was a sign that Christ should be born of his seed, in whom he would become "the father of many nations," (Gen. xvii. 4; xxii. 18; Rom. iv. 11, 13, 16, 17; Gal. iii. 29.) It also reminded them of their duty, according to Jer. iv. 4, "circumcise your *hearts*."

The minister of circumcision was every father of a family, or any other qualified person; thus Abraham

circumcised his son;—(Gen. xvii. 23.) but not a woman, (for the example of Zipporah was contrary to order;) others think that it was a priest, from 1 Macc. ii. 46. The ceremony was performed with a sharp knife of stone, or glass, or iron; and all the males were thus circumcised, both the Israelites and those that were born to them of slaves and handmaids; it was performed on the eighth day, nor was it lawful to perform it before, in order that in this way consideration may be had for the tender age of children, and that the Israelites might not imagine the grace of God to depend on the outward sign. The modern Jews act ridiculously in circumcising their children, who have died before the eighth day, in the burying ground, in order that, as they think, God may acknowledge them as the seed of Israel, and not pass them by in the future resurrection as profane persons. The form of prayer used by the Jews in the circumcision of their infants, is as follows. *As thou hast admitted this child into the covenant of Abraham our father, so admit him into the law of Moses, into thy protection, and safety; into matrimony and good works.* To neglect this rite was a crime, Gen. xvii. 14; and not merely infants but adult proselytes were circumcised. The ceremony was accompanied with the giving of a name to the child, Gen. xxi. 5, 4; Luke i. 59; ii. 21, and witnesses were present, (Isaiah viii. 2; Luke i. 58, 59.)

Now circumcision testified the corruption of human nature; for a new-born child could not be admitted into the covenant of God without first having his blood shed, and being, as it were, purified thereby. It was also "a seal of the righteousness of faith," as Paul calls it; and the sign of the covenant between God and men. (Gen. xvii.) It sealed "the promise solemnly made to Abraham, concerning the birth of the Messiah; for the blood shed in circumcision represented the blood of Christ, and also the sanctification of man, which is called "the circumcision made without hands," (Col. ii. 11.) This rite was to be abrogated at Christ's coming, but still by degrees; by the death of Christ it was abrogated *de jure*, yet on account of those Jews who were weak in faith, Paul chose to circumcise Timothy, (Acts xvi. 1—3.) And yet subsequently he would not have Titus circumcised. (Gal. ii. 3—5.) After the destruction of the temple it was abolished along with other ceremonies. He, therefore, who submits to circumcision as a necessary part of divine worship, or as the means of justification, "is fallen

from grace," and rejects Christ, since in this way he testifies that all things have not been completed by Christ and also binds himself to the observance of the whole law, Gal. v. 3.

The second sacrament of the Old Testament is the *passover*, a name derived from "the passing over" of the angel, (Exod. xii. 13,) and the word in scripture signifies the passing over of the angel—the paschal lamb, (Exod. xii. 11, 21. 2 Chron. xxxv. 11. Luke xxii. 7,)—the feast of the passover, (2 Kings xxiii. 21, 22. Luke xxii. 1,)—the sacrifices usually offered at that feast, (Deut. xvi. 2. John xviii. 28,)—and the sacrament, which consisted in the slaying of the paschal lamb, and in the feasting upon it, in which latter sense we here take the word. Although it was a sacrament, as far as the banquet or feast was concerned, it was also a sacrifice, as it regards the slaughter of the lamb, the shedding of its blood, and the offering of it in sacrifice. It was first instituted in Egypt, and celebrated on the last night, before the Israelites took their departure. (Exod. xii. 1.) It was to be celebrated at its first institution with certain ceremonies. A lamb or a kid of the male kind, not exceeding a year old, was to be used for this service; which was to be taken out of the fold in the tenth day of the month Abib, or Nisan, and to be kept in the house. On the fourteenth day it was slaughtered between the beginning of the evening sacrifice, and the setting of the sun, from the third to the fifth hour, according to Josephus. The blood was to be sprinkled on the door-posts. It was eaten on the fifteenth day, after sun-set, only by circumcised persons, and it was eaten roast, by those at table, who were not less than ten, nor more than twenty in number. It was eaten with unleavened bread, and bitter herbs; and every morsel of leaven in the house was carefully collected, and consumed in the flames. They also ate it in the dress or habit of persons going on a journey in haste: not a bone of it was to be broken, and whatever was left of it was to be burned, it being unlawful for the sacred flesh to be spoiled or corrupted. In Egypt, the place where the lamb was slain, was a private house, (Exod. xii. 7,) afterwards it was the custom to kill it in the tabernacle, or in the court of the temple, (Deut. xvi. 5, 6. 2 Chron. xxxv. 6,) but it was always eaten in private dwellings. In Egypt those who administered the passover were the heads of families, with the priests and Levites, (2 Chron. xxx. 15—17;

xxxv. 5, 6, 10, 11.) There was also a *second passover*, to be celebrated on the fourteenth day of the second month by those, who, in the first month, had been absent, or unclean, (Num. ix. 6, 10, 11,) and then there was one feast day.

Now the Jewish passover commemorated the *passing by* of the angel, and the Exodus of the Israelites, (Exod. xii. 12;) there were indeed three sorts of *passing*, which were thus commemorated, viz. that of severity and death, with regard to the first-born of the Egyptians—that of grace and favour with regard to the first-born of the Israelites—and the passing out of slavery into liberty and the inheritance of Canaan. But this ceremony principally prefigured the sacrifice of Christ, the true "Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world," (John i. 29,) who was "without blemish," (1 Pet. i. 19,) and who is called "our Passover." (1 Cor. v. 7.) The fulfilment therefore of it we find in the cross and death of Christ; on which we may advert to what many have maintained, that the paschal lamb was roasted, having been formed into a figure resembling that of a cross—also in the life of a believer through the preaching of the gospel—and in our own death and resurrection. Such, then, were the ordinary sacraments; those which were extraordinary were, the miraculous cloud, the passage through the Red Sea, the manna, the water out of the rock, and the brazen serpent; these, however, were rather types of Christ, and of his blessings, than sacraments.

Now these sacraments of the Old are different from the sacraments of the New Testament in many things; while in many things they agree. They differ from each other, in the outward signs and ceremonies, in the facility of using the signs, in the mode of signification, the old sacraments signifying Christ to come, the new, Christ already come. The former were obligatory only upon the posterity of Abraham, the latter belong to all nations. They differ also in their duration; the old continued to the time of Christ's advent, the new will continue to the end of the world; in their clearness or plainness, not as it regards the matter of the signs, in which respect the old appear more significant, but as it regards the plainness of the word which is added to the new; and also in their efficacy, not that the new sacraments effect and produce more grace than the old, but that they have a more sealing power. But they all agree

in the following particulars—both have God for their Author; both signify the same thing, namely, Christ with his benefits, hence the ancients are said to have "eaten the same meat, and drunk the same drink;" (1 Cor. x. 3, 4;) both were to be received in the same way, namely, by faith; both have the same word of command and promise, though not the same expressions; and, lastly, both had the same effect; hence there is an exchange of names between the old and new sacraments, which are promiscuously ascribed to believers under the Old and New Testaments. Thus *circumcision and passover* are attributed to us, (1 Cor. v. 7; Col. ii. 11,) and *baptism* to the ancient saints, (1 Cor. x. 2.)

The sacraments of the Old Testament were indeed shadows and types of future things, yet did they set forth and apply "the body itself, which is Christ." And although they are said "to be nothing," and to "avail nothing," (1 Cor. vii. 19; Gal. vi. 15,) and to be "weak and beggarly elements," yet they are so described, merely when considered in themselves, in respect only to the signs, opposed to the thing signified, in which sense the same may be said of the New Testament symbols, or when they are considered as abrogated since Christ's coming, or simply in regard to the abuse of them by men, who tied the grace of God to them.

CHAPTER IV.

OF BAPTISM.

The sacraments of the New Testament are two, viz., *Baptism* and the *Lord's supper;* we read of no others, instituted by Christ; to these two only, belong what is required in a sacrament; Paul mentions no others; and therefore no more are required to generate and strengthen the spiritual life in believers. Now in these two sacraments Christ preserved an allusion to the Jewish customs. In the *first* place, it was the custom of the Jews, to wash with water those who renounced the worship of false gods, and embraced that of the true God; hence

the practice of consecrating the proselytes by *circumcision, sacrifice, and baptism*, from which arose a common saying among them, *A man is not a proselyte till he be circumcised and baptized.* This was their manner of proceeding in baptism. They questioned the proselyte, whether he wished sincerely to embrace the Jewish religion. They instructed him in the different articles of faith, especially the unity of God, and the sin of idolatry; they circumcised him; and when the wound was healed, they brought him to baptism in the presence of three persons; during which rite they taught him the precepts of the law. This baptism it was lawful to perform in rivers, lakes, fountains, or in other receptacles of water, but nowhere else. And they immersed the whole body, in order that the baptized might be accounted a child of the covenant, and might be reckoned, as it were, *born again;* for they pretended that some new soul was sent into the body of the proselyte instead of his former heathen soul; hence they compared him to a new-born child, to which Christ perhaps alludes in his words to Nicodemus: (John iii. 5:) but whoever wishes further information on this subject, may consult Selden, Buxtorf, Lightfoot, and Altingius. Now John the Baptist administered this rite among the Jews in the manner above described, in order that he might show that they, seeing that they were very corrupt, needed amendment of life not less than the Gentiles; and for this end also the same rite was used by Christ.

Another custom among the Jews was, to invite their relations on feast-days; and at the close of the repast some bread of better quality was brought; the host broke it, and distributed portions to the guests: then was brought a cup also, out of which all drank after the master of the feast; there was also giving of thanks, and a grateful commemoration of the history corresponding to the day's solemnity, together with a hymn to the praise of God; which hymn was sung at the passover to celebrate the deliverance from Egypt, at the feast of Pentecost, the giving of the law, at the feast of tabernacles, their conduct and support through the wilderness. Now the Lord Jesus in instituting the holy supper, observed these rites, adding thereto the commemoration of his sufferings and death.

But we must treat now of *baptism*, the first sacrament, the sacrament of *initiation*, and, as it were, the *threshold* of grace; in doing which we shall examine into the fol-

lowing particulars, what is the meaning of the term, how many kinds of baptism there are, how it should be defined, what are the signs, the thing signified, and the analogy between these. We shall also inquire into the subjects of baptism, its necessity, the mode of its administration, its ministers, and its efficacy.

First, the word *baptism*, is derived from βαπτειν, to *dip or steep;* and because the Hebrew word טבל which the Septuagint renders βαπτιζειν, (2 Kings v. 14,) is taken for רחץ which signifies to *wash*, hence the word βαπτιζειν is simply used for *to wash*, (Mark vii. 4,) whence the "divers washings," mentioned Heb. ix. 10.

Secondly, there are various *kinds* of baptism distinguished by the ancients, but particularly four, viz., the baptism of *fire*, that of *blood*, that of *light*, and that of *water*. The baptism of *fire* they called the pouring out of the Spirit, either in an ordinary or extraordinary manner; the baptism of *blood* was the martyrdom of those, who being not yet baptized with water, were baptized as it were in their own blood, as Basil speaks in his Homily concerning the Martyrs; and to this Christ also alludes, Matt. xx. 22; Mark x. 38, where he speaks of being "baptized with the baptism that he was to be baptized with." The baptism of *light* was the doctrine preached by any one; and that of water, *baptism* properly so called. Now the scriptures represent baptism as *external* and *internal;* the former is visible, and is performed by man; the latter is invisible, and is effected by the Spirit. Both these were alluded to by John the Baptist, when he said, "I indeed baptize you with water, but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire," (Matt. iii. 11;) and Peter distinguishes the baptism in which "the filth of the flesh is put away," from that which consists in "the answer of a good conscience," (1 Peter iii. 21,) in which passage, already quoted by us, the apostle shows, that baptism is a kind of solemn and mutual covenant, in which God, as it were, asks the baptized whether he is willing to devote himself to a sincere obedience? And the baptized also asks the Lord, whether he will be pleased to be his God? In the primitive church, the bishop asked the catechumen, whether *he renounced Satan*, to which the latter replied, *I do renounce;* the bishop then asked, *Dost thou believe in Christ?* The catechumen replied, *I do believe.* This is what Cyprian calls the *interrogation of baptism.*

Thirdly, as to the *definition* of baptism, we may say,

it is the first divinely-instituted sacrament of the New Testament, in which, by the sprinkling of water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, both remission of sins through Christ's blood, and sanctification by his Spirit, are set forth and sealed to believers. The *author* of this baptism is Christ, who instituted it, when he said, "Go, teach all nations, baptizing them," &c. (Matt. xxviii. 19.) Hence the apostles, as we read, baptized with water all those whom they had converted to the faith of Christ. (Acts ii. 41; viii. 12, 13, 38; x. 47; xvi. 15; xviii. 8; xxii. 16.) The *sign* of baptism is *water*, the real and natural element, not spittle, nor oil, nor honey; no single trace of such things can be found in scripture, and Christian simplicity at once repudiates them. Christ chose water, both on account of the facility of finding it, and of its agreement with the thing signified; and the apostles used nothing else. The Seleucians and Hermians acted ridiculously in not admitting the baptism of water, as Augustine observes, from misapplying the passage in Matt. iii. 11. As also the Paulicians, who made the performance of baptism to consist in the mere uttering of words. The *thing signified* in baptism is, either the *blood*, or the *Spirit*, of Christ, or rather both; our justification being by the former, and our sanctification by the latter; hence we are said to be baptized "into the remission of sins," and baptism is called "the washing of regeneration." (Titus iii. 5.) The *analogy* between the sign and the thing signified is plain; for, first, as the filth of the body is washed away by water, so the blood and Spirit of Christ wash away the filth of the soul. (1 Cor. vi. 11; 1 John i. 7.) Again, immersion in the water, and emerging from it, as practised by the ancients, signify the death of the old man, and the resurrection of the new. (Rom. vi. 3, 4; Col. ii. 12.) *In the water*, says Chrysostom, *as in a kind of grave, the old man is buried, since, being wholly immersed, he is concealed under the water; then, when we emerge from it, the new man rises up.* And again, the sprinkling of water, denotes that we are sprinkled with the blood of Christ, for the remission of sins.

Fourthly, the *subjects* of baptism are all that are in the covenant, whether they be really such, or are reckoned as likely to become such, either on account of their outward profession and communion with the faithful, or on account of their being born of Christian parents; without any distinction of sex, age, or nation; although we

must confess that baptism belongs to the elect only. Hence we infer, that beasts and inanimate things, such as ships, standards, bells, &c. ought not to be baptized; such baptisms are an intolerable mockery of so sacred an ordinance. We infer, also, that the children of heathens, &c. are not to be baptized, except they are grown up, and have been instructed in Christianity; therefore Gregory I. very much blamed Chilpericus for compelling the Jews to be baptized. Now that *infants* may and ought to be baptized, is proved from Matt. xxviii. 17, where Christ commands *all* to be baptized, and therefore infants; nor does it matter, that in this passage instruction is made to precede baptism, for instruction applies only to adults, who were the persons our Lord had in view, since the first churches were to be composed of adults. The parents were, therefore, first to be taught, but when they had been baptized, their children were to be baptized also. Besides, the covenant of God, and the seals thereof, belong to infants, (Gen. xvii. 7,) and "the promise" is made unto them. (Acts ii. 39.) To infants also belong remission of sins, and regeneration; in short, "the kingdom of heaven;" therefore the *signs* of these blessings may be bestowed upon them. Moreover, the necessity of baptism is the same as that of circumcision, for the former succeeded into the place of the latter, and both are sacraments of initiation; now the Jews were in the habit of baptizing proselytes together with their children. This the ancient church believed, and it acted accordingly, whatever Ludovicus Vives and Walafridus Strabo have said, the former in his notes on Augustine's City of God, and the latter in his Ecclesiastical Records. For it is clearly proved, from the testimonies of Irenæus, Origen, Cyprian, Ambrose, Cyril, and many other writers; and in the council held at Carthage, A. D. 418, an anathema is pronounced on him who denies that newborn infants ought to be baptized. The same doctrine is laid down by other councils.

Fifthly, as to the *necessity* of baptism, it is not a mere temporary rite, to distinguish Christians from heathens; it is not indeed so far necessary, as that we cannot be saved without it; for many have been saved without it; and, therefore, although Christ declares that "he who believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved," he does not declare that he who is not baptized shall be damned, but only "he that believeth not:" yet baptism is so far necessary, that it cannot be neglected and despised with-

out sin. Now this necessity is evident from the following arguments—baptism succeeded circumcision, therefore as the latter was always in force until Christ's first coming, so the former must be in force until his second coming;—for baptism stands on the same footing as the supper, which is to last till Christ comes, (1 Cor. xi. 26;) —lastly, the effects of baptism not only extend to those who are converted from unbelief, but to those who are born of believers;—which effects are communion with Christ, (Rom. vi. 3, 4; Gal. iii. 27,) remission of sins, (Acts xxii. 16,) renewing of the Spirit, (Titus iii. 5,) and eternal life. (Mark xvi. 16.) Therefore baptism is *necessary.*

Sixthly, as to the *mode of administration:* the baptized had usually their whole body immersed in the water, (Matt. iii. 6, 16; John iii. 23; Acts viii. 38;) this form could be well used in hot climates, and it must be allowed, that such a mode best figured that grace, by which our sins are as it were sunk, and we rise from the depths of sin. But in the present age we make use of *sprinkling;* because we believe that this mode was also practised, even in the times of the apostle; since it is hardly credible, that when three thousand were baptized in one day, all were immersed; and because baptism was then administered from house to house; besides which, the word *baptism* denotes sprinkling, as well as immersion. We also maintain this form, because the thing signified in baptism is designated by the same word, "sprinkling." (1 Peter i. 2; Heb. x. 22.) And moreover, it is quite enough for the analogy, since baptism depends not on the quantity of water used; and, finally, because sprinkling is more convenient for the purpose of consulting both the health of the baptized, especially in the case of very young children in these cold regions, and also the modesty of adult persons. The Muscovites err in teaching that immersion is essential to baptism; and those Greek Christians were infatuated, who, in the council of Florence, called the Latins ἀβαπτίστους, (*unbaptized.*) It is a matter of indifference whether sprinkling be used thrice or once: the ancients appear to have sprinkled three times, in order to represent the Persons in the Trinity. *Not once*, says Tertullian, *but three times we dip, in the separate names of the three Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.* As for ourselves, we sprinkle once only, to denote the unity of the essence; it is of no moment, nor need we

dispute with any man about it. It is better to follow the form of baptism prescribed by Christ, in the name of the three Persons; nor is it lawful to change this form. It is not, indeed, expressly said, that the apostles used it, but it does not follow that they omitted it, since they baptized according to Christ's command. Now this form teaches us several things; for while the minister baptizes in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, he declares that the water with which he sprinkles the child, is the sign of his admission into God's covenant, and into the church—that the Father receives him as his child, the Son as a member of his body, the Holy Ghost as a temple in which he is pleased to dwell: and on the part of the baptized, it is a sign of his engagement with the Triune Jehovah, to worship and obey the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and consecrate himself for ever to them. This form also denotes that the ordinance is not administered by the authority, and at the pleasure of man, but by the appointment of God. There have been various other ceremonies added, such as being clothed in white, the tasting of honey and milk, the sign of the cross on the forehead and the breast, exorcism, &c. which were not instituted by Christ, nor used by the apostles.

Seventhly, the *ministers* of the sacraments being those to whom Christ has given authority to preach the gospel, and Christ having joined these two together as parts of the public ministry, (Matt. xxviii. 19,)—we therefore acknowledge no baptism which is administered by a layman, (notwithstanding what has been said by Tertullian, the Apostolical Constitutions, the council of Illiberis, Jerome, Gelasius, and Augustine, though Basil and some others maintain the contrary,) or by a woman, or by a child; much less do we imagine that baptism is valid, which is administered by a heathen or Jewish adventurer, merely baptizing in the name of Christ, as was the opinion of Pope Nicholas I., and of the council of Florence. Under this head may be introduced two inquiries which are frequently made. 1. Whether the *baptism* of *John* was essentially the same as the *baptism* of *Christ?* The reply is, that they agree in the essentials, since both had God for their author—both had the same sign, viz. water, and both the same signification, viz. remission and regeneration, (Luke iii. 22; John i. 33; Matt. iii. 7, 8; Luke iii. 3; Acts xix. 4,) and both the same end. Hence Tertullian was accustomed to say,

that there was no difference between those whom John baptized in Jordan, and those whom Peter baptized in the Tiber. Yet the two baptisms differ in a few non-essential circumstances—that of John exhibited Christ as coming and about to die, ours exhibits him as dead and risen again. Whether those who had been baptized by John, were rebaptized by Paul, is disputed among the learned. It is indifferent to us what is said upon this, for since the ministry of John was a connecting link between the old and new dispensations, those who were baptized with John's baptism, might usually have been baptized with that of Christ, even as those could be baptized, who had been circumcised. 2. Another question is, whether that baptism is lawful, which is administered by heretics. We reply, that a distinction must be made between those heretics who corrupt the substance of baptism, and omit or alter the form of the institution, and those who retain the essentials, and maintain the true doctrine of the Trinity, though they err in other points of doctrine, as did formerly the Novatians and Donatists, and in the present age, the papists.* With respect to the former class of heretics, we say that baptism administered by them is not lawful: for this reason the baptism of those Arians was rejected, who baptized *in the name of the Father, as the true God, of Jesus Christ, as the Saviour, and a creature, and in the Holy Ghost, as the servant of both;* though indeed learned men doubt whether the Arians did baptize in this form or not. The baptism of the Eunomians was equally to be disallowed, which was performed, according to Epiphanius, *in the name of the uncreated God, of the created Son, and the sanctifying Spirit, created by the Son.* The council of Nice also required the disciples of Paul of Samosata to be rebaptized. But here we must remark, that the question is not concerning baptism administered by a pastor, who is heretical indeed, but secretly, in an orthodox church; for in this case baptism is lawful. With respect to the other class of heretics, who retain the essentials of baptism, not changing or corrupting the form, we maintain that baptism administered by these, is valid and lawful: for, although they are not true members of the church, this

* [The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, at their Session in May, 1845, decided the question "Is Baptism in the Church of Rome valid?" in the negative, by a vote of 173 to 8.—*Note by the Editor of the Board of Publication.*]

does not prevent them from lawfully baptizing, provided they retain the essentials of the ordinance; since in the performance of the rite, they merely lend their hand and tongue to the Lord, who himself baptizes, and works through their instrumentality.

Eighthly, it remains that we speak of the efficacy of baptism: few observations will be necessary, after what we have said before of the efficacy of the sacraments generally. We need only see what graces are represented and sealed to us in baptism, viz. communion with Christ, and a title to his benefits — remission of original sin—and a new birth. The Lord's supper is the sacrament of nutrition, since it nourishes the divine life; but baptism is the sacrament of regeneration. There is also adoption, for we are received into the number of God's children: God regenerates none without adopting them, as he adopts none whom he does not regenerate. Observe also that we must distinguish between the baptized, as adults, or infants: with regard to the former, we have nothing new to say, but must refer to our former remarks on the efficacy of the sacraments.

With respect to baptized infants, we must divide them into four classes. The *first* contains those who grow up, but are never converted, and who God saw would die impenitent; with respect to these, baptism sets forth nothing, and seals nothing, since it is absurd to say that God pardons their original sin: for either God regards these as in communion with Christ, or he does not; if the former, how could it be possible that they should not continue in such communion? if the latter, how can he have pardoned their original sin, since there is no remission of sin but in Christ, through the imputation of his righteousness? Again, either God, forgiving the original sin, has received them into his covenant, or he has not: if he has not, how can he have pardoned them, since he pardons only those whom he adopts? if he has, how is it that he leaves them in their corruption, and does not convert them? The *second* class of infants includes those, who live long after baptism, but are not actually converted till the thirtieth or fortieth year of their age, or till the close of their lives. With regard to these, baptism does not disclose or put forth its efficacy before they are actually converted; for as long as they continue impenitent and unbelieving, it cannot be said that God has justified, adopted, admitted them into his covenant, or granted them any measure of his Holy Spirit. But bap-

tism becomes efficacious in such persons, inasmuch as the remembrance of their having been baptized does the same thing for them, as their baptism itself would have done (had it been then efficacious); for God displays his grace to them the moment they remember their baptism; nor is this a bare theoretical remembrance, but that which is joined with repentance for the sins committed since baptism. The *third class* is composed of those infants who live after baptism, but in whom, while reason unfolds itself, piety and faith are discovered, corresponding with the good instruction of their parents; in regard to these we may say, that baptism has been efficacious, that God has forgiven their original sin, and given them such a measure of the Spirit, as renders them capable of embracing the offers of the gospel, when reason begins to dawn upon their minds. But it may be asked, whether original sin is forgiven them only at the period of their baptism, or before it. We reply that they may obtain all spiritual blessings from the very moment of their birth, but that these may be confirmed in baptism, which is the seal, pledge, or earnest of them; the infant, indeed, knows not what is taking place. but when he arrives at years of discretion, then he recognizes it, and from the knowledge of it, possesses every motive to holiness. Some infants are regenerated in the womb, and before baptism, others in baptism, others after: we assign no particular period.

But should any one say, he cannot comprehend the operations of the Holy Ghost in these cases; we reply that the thing ought not to be denied, merely because we do not comprehend it. It is not more difficult to conceive the idea of the Holy Spirit restoring the faculties of the infant, and rendering them capable of receiving evangelical objects, as soon as reason shall dawn, than it is to conceive the idea of original sin, which is nothing else but the depravation of those faculties, inclining them to objects of sense. If we can conceive of the principle of evil before any act of it, why not the principle of good before any act of the same? If Adam had not sinned, his descendants would have been naturally innocent; and why cannot it be conceived, that the Holy Spirit places infants, who are born sinful, in some state of regeneration? The cause of our corruption is the proneness of the soul to follow the motions of the body: why then should we not conceive, that the Holy Spirit prevents the soul from following those motions, and gives it

the power of directing them aright? The *fourth* class of infants remains to be mentioned; viz. those who are baptized, but die before they grow up: with regard to these we say, that, since we cannot doubt that infants are saved, we must not therefore doubt but that baptism, in the case of these, is a public and authoritative declaration on the part of God, that he has forgiven them original sin, and granted them a title to life; since infants cannot be saved without forgiveness of sins and sanctification.

Two observations shall conclude this chapter. First, we must not imagine that the sacrament of baptism impresses on the subject any mark or character, on account of which the rite cannot be repeated; for the scripture nowhere mentions any thing about such a mark, and all the efficacy of the sacraments depends not on this, but on the grace of the Holy Spirit; but still we maintain that baptism is not to be repeated, for as we are not twice born, so there is no need to be twice baptized. The Ethiopian Christians are therefore very foolish, who every year, on the day of Epiphany, repeat their baptism in honour of Christ, who they believe was baptized on that day: as also are those heretics, who both rebaptize their children when grown up, and also those who leave one sect for another. Secondly, we must not imagine that infants dying unbaptized are condemned. For, if a child were condemned for want of baptism, which was omitted without any fault of his, he would "bear the iniquity" of his parent, or of the person by whose fault he was deprived of the ordinance. And, if this were the case, the certainty of an infant's salvation would depend on the will of a midwife, a Jew, or a pagan priest.

CHAPTER V.

OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

The other sacrament of the New Testament is the *Lord's Supper*, in which, by the distribution and reception of bread and wine, broken and poured out, is set forth and

sealed to believers the communion of Christ's body broken for them on the cross, and of his blood shed for them, unto eternal life. Various names are given to this sacrament, both by the sacred and by ecclesiastical writers. It is called by the former "the Lord's Supper," because it was first instituted and celebrated in the evening; it is called "blessing," and "giving of thanks;" because in this rite thanks are given to God, and the symbols are blessed; (1 Cor. x. 16,) the allusion being to the cup at the passover, with which the feast was closed, and which was called כוס הלל, *the cup of praise.* The term *blessing* was applied, partly to the pieces of consecrated bread which were distributed to the communicants, partly to those pieces which at the time of Easter were sent to other neighbouring Christian communities, as a testimony of love, and agreement in the faith (which custom was forbidden by the Council of Laodicea); also to those pieces of bread which were sent to the absent, and distributed to the catechumens. It is also called "the Lord's Table," (1 Cor. x. 21;) and also the "Communion," (1 Cor. x. 16,) on account of the union which the faithful have with Christ and each other, and which is sealed in this sacrament; and because we hereby partake of Christ's death and benefits; and also because all the faithful receive it together in their assemblies. It is further called the "breaking of bread," (Acts ii. 42,) hence the Syriac version renders these words "the breaking of the Eucharist." The ecclesiastical writers express it by a great variety of names, such as, the *feast*—the *sacrament of bread*—the *service*—the *gift*—the *viaticum*—the *passover*—the *sacrifice*—the *love-feast*, &c. &c.

It is no wonder that God instituted this second sacrament; for, after having received us into his family, he engaged to nourish us as his children, and continually to preserve and strengthen the life once bestowed; of which kindness and love he has been pleased to assure us by giving a certain pledge: as therefore he was pleased to shadow forth our regeneration by baptism, the sacrament of our initiation and entrance into the church, so by the sacred Supper he is pleased to signify our nourishment and support by Christ. This holy rite was instituted to commemorate the death of Christ, (Luke xxii. 19; 1 Cor. xi. 24, 25;) to represent and seal our union with Christ, and participation of his benefits, and to assure us of remission of sins, and of salvation

obtained for us by the death of Christ. Hence the canticle used in the Roman church—*O sacred feast, in which Christ is taken, his passion remembered, the soul filled with grace, and the pledge of future glory given to us!* An account of the institution is given us by the Evangelists, and by Paul, (Matt. xxvi. 26—30; Luke xxii. 14—21; 1 Cor. xi. 23—27.)

Now the symbols which were adopted in this Supper were *bread* and *wine;* a double sign, in order more clearly to set forth our Saviour's death, and the separation of his body and blood in it; and to give the idea of complete nourishment, for which drink, no less than food, is required. Bread and wine were used in the Old Testament sacrifices in an especial manner, (Num. xv. 4—11,) and our Lord employed the symbols that were most common, familiar and obvious because, as the sacrament was to continue in all countries, and for the use of all believers, to the end of the world, it was necessary that it should not consist of difficult signs, and burdensome ceremonies, lest the want of these should be experienced in any place. It was more agreeable to the spiritual dispensation of the New Testament, that some common symbols should be employed, such as would not too deeply engage either the eyes or the imagination, and thus divert us from the contemplation of the thing signified. Nor is it without signification, that the Saviour would not place upon this table the blood-stained flesh of animals, as in the sacred festivals of the Old Testament, but simply bread and wine; for after the blood-shedding of Christ, no more blood was to be poured out in sacrifice.

Now the bread used by Christ was *unleavened*, but this by accident, it being the feast of the Passover, in which it was not lawful to use, or even to have, any other, (Exod. xii. 19;) but on other occasions the Jews used leavened bread. The matter is quite indifferent, though it is more suitable to use leavened, both because it is more consistent with the design of Christ, which was to use common bread, which can every where be met with, and because the necessity of using unleavened bread belongs only to the Jewish ceremony. It appears that the sacramental symbols were formerly taken from the offerings of bread and wine made by the faithful, which were undoubtedly of common and leavened bread. The other symbol is wine, or the "fruit of the vine," (Matt. xxvi. 29.) It is indifferent

in what way it be received, whether mixed with water, as was the custom of the ancients, and as perhaps it was done by Christ, or pure. Now the ancients mixed it with water, to designate three mysteries, viz. the blood and water which came out of the Saviour's pierced side; the union of Christ's two natures; and his union with the faithful. This we neither blame nor commend; we may merely remark, that in places where there is a scarcity of wine, that which is there used as a substitute for the juice of the grape, may be lawfully used in the sacrament; the same may be said in regard to the bread. Pope Innocent, A. D. 1490, granted a dispensation to the Norwegians, to perform the sacrament without wine, because it could not be kept, on account of the intensity of the cold.

It remains for us to examine the ceremonies which Christ used in the institution and celebration of the Supper. *First*, he "took and blessed," (Matt. xxvi. 26; Luke xxii. 19;) in this way he consecrated the bread and wine, i. e. set them apart for sacred uses by prayer and thanksgiving; following in this the custom of the Jews, among whom the master of the family, holding in his hand the bread yet unbroken, pronounced over it a solemn benediction. Thus in the eating of the Passover, there was this particular form of blessing used at the consecration of the unleavened bread—*Blessed be the Lord our God, King of the world, who brought us and our fathers out of Egypt, and commanded us to eat unleavened bread;* and in the consecration of the cup—*Blessed be the Lord our God, King of the world, who created the fruit of the vine.* It is probable that Christ used a particular form of consecration. By this *benediction* the symbols were consecrated, seeing it contained a *thanksgiving* to God for benefits received, and a *prayer* that the symbols might be rendered effectual to the spiritual benefit of the receivers. And in this way the ancients were accustomed to consecrate the symbols by prayer, as appears from their liturgies and writings; and this was not done in a whisper, but with a loud voice, so that the people might say, *Amen.* Nor is there any fear of the sacrament being degraded in this manner; for otherwise the gospel ought not to be preached with a loud voice. Thus it is plain, that by this benediction the symbols are consecrated, since they are blessed for no other end, than to be put to a holy use. This consecration cannot be effected without prayer; it rather consists of prayer, by

which the grace of God is implored upon the symbols, to sanctify them. Thus Solomon consecrated the temple by a remarkable prayer, and thus Christ blessed and consecrated the bread in the miracle of the loaves. By this form the bread and wine are not changed, but only the use and intent of them.

The *second* ceremony was "the breaking of the bread," which custom was also derived from the Jews; among whom the head of the family, having blessed the bread, brake it, and distributed it to the guests; and he brake the bread for this reason, that the loaves of the Jews, which resembled small cakes, being broad, not thick, were usually broken, not cut; nay, according to Baronius, the Jews baked their loaves with incisions, to mark off the various portions; hence they did not cut, but break them. But not only was this ceremony used by Christ, after the example of the Jews, but also to represent his body that was to be broken on the cross; and therefore we do not think that such a ceremony ought to be neglected; first, because Christ commanded us to do as he did, saying, *Do this*; nor can it be objected, that many circumstances, observed by Christ, are not to be imitated by us, as that he celebrated the supper in the evening, reclining according to the ancient custom; for the breaking of the bread belongs to the supper *essentially*; the celebration of the supper in the evening or morning is *accidental*. Again, because Paul expressly intimates this ceremony, saying, "The bread which we *break*," &c. (1 Cor. x. 16.) Further, because it excellently sets forth the mangling of Christ on the cross; thus the apostle, relating the form of the institution, says that it is the body of Christ "broken for you," (1 Cor. xi. 24.) Lastly, because the church, in the apostles' time, always used this ceremony, (Acts ii. 42,) and it continued to the twelfth century, if we may credit Erasmus; hence the pieces of bread were called *crumbs*, *gems*, *holy fragments*: and in the Roman ritual framed upwards of eight hundred years ago, we find that the deacons broke the host before they distributed it.

After the distribution (which was according to the custom of the Jews, among whom the head of the family, after he had himself eaten, gave the bread to the rest,) we have the injunction of the Saviour, "Take, eat, ... this do in remembrance of me," whence it is inferred, that Christ held out the bread, to be taken hold of by the hand. There was an express rule among the Jews,

cited by Maimonides, which ran thus—*He who breaks must give the portion to each, and he to whom it is given, receives it in his hand*, &c. In the ancient church there were various forms used. In Justin's time the deacons distributed the bread to every one present. In the time of Clement of Alexandria each took his part out of the plate. In the time of Tertullian it was ordained, that the bread should be received at the hands of the officiating ministers; some time afterwards they used vessels of gold or precious stones (to receive it in,) which were forbidden by a certain council, and it was decreed that the communion should be received by the hands formed into the shape of a cross: A. D. 490, it was ordered that women should not receive the eucharist with their hands bare, like the men, but in clean linen cloth; and after this, the touching of it by the hands was prohibited to all. Our Saviour did the same in regard to the *cup*, as he did to the *bread*, commanding his disciples to drink, as he had commanded them to eat.

It is inquired, whether Christ himself partook of the Supper? The reply is, that it was customary among the Jews, for the head of the family to eat first of the consecrated bread, and we know that Christ kept the Jewish customs in view; he also used the same phrase in reference to the cup of the *Eucharist*, (Matt. xxvi.29.) which he used in reference to the *passover*, (Luke xxii. 18.) besides, no reason can be alleged why Christ should not have partaken of this sacrament, as well as of baptism. The fathers were of opinion that Christ did thus partake of it.

The thing signified in the supper was shown by Christ himself, when he declared of the bread, "this is my body," just as the Jews called the paschal lamb the *body of the passover;* and of the wine, "this is my blood;" the breaking of the one, and the pouring out of the other, represent the breaking of Christ's body, and the shedding of his blood: the eating and the drinking of these signify our intimate union with the Saviour. The analogy between the signs and the thing signified is plain; for, 1. as bread and wine support and preserve natural life, so Christ's body and blood are the means of nourishing and maintaining spiritual life: as bread and wine are separated in the holy supper, so the body and blood of Christ were separated on the cross—as the one is broken, and the other poured out, so the body of Christ was mangled, and his blood poured out—as the former do not nourish,

except received in the mouth, so the latter do not nourish the soul, unless received and applied by faith—as the communicants are "all partakers of one bread," so the faithful are partakers of one Christ, and are united with each other in one body. (1 Cor. x. 17.) Now the connexion of the bread with the body of Christ is merely relative, as that between a king and his image, between a ring and the dignity expressed by it, between a document or title-deed, and the possession.

The Lord's Supper ought to be administered only to adults, not to infants, as many of the ancients imagined; for there is a very great difference between the two sacraments. For baptism is the sacrament of initiation into the church; the holy supper was ordained for the nourishment of the soul, and the strengthening of our faith, by commemorating the benefits of Christ; of the former infants are capable, of the latter only adults. This is further confirmed from Paul's injunction to those who receive the supper, to "examine themselves," which infants cannot do; nor is it more strange, that baptized infants are not admitted to the supper, than that circumcised infants formerly did not eat the passover. This holy rite, also, must not be administered to persons deranged, except when they enjoy lucid intervals, during which they cease their insanity, and are capable of rightly receiving the communion. Neither should it be administered to unbaptized persons, for before baptism men are not reckoned to be in the church: therefore it was the custom to exclude catechumens, and also persons in a state of penitence. With regard to dumb persons, they may communicate, provided they show their faith by particular and undoubted signs.

CHAPTER VI.

OF VARIOUS QUESTIONS IN DISPUTE ABOUT THE LORD'S SUPPER.

THE words of Christ were, "*This is my body;*" now the question is, whether these words are to be understood

literally or figuratively: we maintain the latter. And *first*, in proof of this, be it observed, that the figurative style was used by eastern writers; (Gen. xlix. Deut. xxxiii; 2 Sam. xxiii; 1 Kings ii. 5.) Again, the same style is often used by Christ, as when he calls himself a *vine*, or the *way*. It is also the style very much used in common conversation; we say of a picture, *This is the King*. Moreover, the verb *to be*, among the Hebrews is often used for to *signify* or *represent*; thus "the seven kine *are* seven years"—the "bones *are* the house of Israel"—"that rock *was* Christ"—"the good seed *are* the children of the kingdom." At the celebration of the passover, the head of the house was accustomed to say, "This *is* the bread of affliction, which our fathers ate," and, as before remarked, the roast lamb was called "the body of the passover." Finally, Christ uses this figurative mode of expression, when he says, *This cup is the New Testament*, and the body of Christ is said to be *broken*, though on that occasion it could not be broken, except in a figure.

Secondly, we maintain that these words must be taken in a figurative sense, from the four following rules, dictated by common sense:—When any passage expresses something absurd, if taken literally, it ought to be taken in a figurative sense—also, when a proposition, if received literally, is impossible, and contains contradictions—when the text would appear to enjoin a sin, if taken in its proper sense—when, if so taken, things unworthy are attributed to God. Now all these consequences would follow, if the words of Christ were understood literally, as we shall see hereafter. The point is further evident from considering the very nature of sacraments, which are *signs* and *figures*. Thus God says of circumcision—*This is my covenant*; and the paschal lamb is termed *the Lord's passover*. Consider also that we ought to understand the words as the apostles did; now it is plain, that they understood them to be figurative, because they start no objection on a subject so strange and wonderful, and yet they were astonished at most things, as when Christ said unto them, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees." In short the words cannot be understood otherwise than figuratively; for the body of Christ can in no way whatever be predicated of bread; and it is certain, that expressions are and must be figurative, wherever the *predicate* cannot be identified with the *subject*, as in the present case; for

neither is the bread the body of Christ, nor the body of Christ the bread.

In this sense, too, the fathers of the church understood the words. Thus Tertullian speaks—*He made the bread, which he took and distributed to his disciples, his body, saying, this is my body, i. e. the figure of my body:* so Augustine,—*the Lord did not hesitate to say this is my body, when he gave the sign of his body.* And Facundus, Bishop of Hermia, thus speaks—*The sacrament of adoption may be called adoption, (itself,) just as we call the sacrament of Christ's body and blood, which is in the consecrated bread and wine, his body and blood; not that the bread is really and properly his body, nor the wine his blood, but because they contain in them the mystery of his body and blood.*

Another question is, concerning *the presence of Christ,* in the Eucharist: now we admit that he is present in various ways, viz. as God, who fills every place—as being united to us by his Spirit, and displaying his power in us, just as the sun is said to be present in any place into which he darts his beams—as being present by the symbols which represent him—and inasmuch as his body and blood are present to the eyes of our faith. But we deny that Christ's body is actually and really present in this sacrament; for in this way it would follow that it was not a real body, since it would be neither visible nor impenetrable, nor confined within space—and in this way the body would become a spirit; would occupy innumerable places, would be one and yet not one; little and great, at the same time; its bulk could be included within a small point, nay, it could be every where present; who does not perceive the absurdity of these consequences? In this way also we should confound the divinity and humanity of Christ; whereas the former only is infinite; we should also confound his body with his soul. This corporeal presence is, moreover, contrary to scripture, which plainly teaches us that Christ, as man, is "like to us in all things;" that his body was formed of the blessed Virgin, and not of bread—that it is visible and palpable—that Christ left the earth, and ascended into heaven—that he was not "always *to be* with his disciples, like the poor"—that he is to remain in heaven till the restitution of all things—that we are not to believe those who say, "Lo, he is in the desert;—he is in the secret chambers." Indeed, it is contrary to Christ's own words, when he said, "Do this in remem-

brance of me," which are to be joined with those of Paul, "As oft as ye do this, ye do shew the Lord's death *until he come.*" Besides, such a presence as this would be useless, for the presence of Christ's Spirit alone is useful; nor is his body less present to faith, though it is in heaven, than if it were invisible on earth.

From all this we conclude, that the bread and wine cannot be said to be changed into Christ's body and blood, which is the doctrine of *transubstantiation.* This is contrary to the evidence of our *senses*, not one merely, but many; for we see, taste, smell, and touch nothing but bread. Nor is the testimony of our senses to be rejected; for we must distinguish those *mysteries*, which are clearly separated from bodily things, and are not at all objects of sense, (such as the mystery of the Trinity,) from those mysteries which are contained in bodily things, as the sacraments are, in which, therefore, the senses are to be regarded; hence Christ appealed to them in proof of his resurrection. It is also contrary to *reason*, which suggests to us, that a body cannot occupy several places at once; that it possesses quantity or extension; that the accidents cannot exist without the subject (in which they are and must be.) It is no less contrary to *scripture*, as appears from what is there said of the corporeal presence; which may be confirmed from this circumstance, that the symbols retain the same name *after* their consecration, as they had *before* it, as is plain from examining Matt. xxvi. 29; Mark xiv. 25; 1 Cor. xi. 23, 26—28. This doctrine, moreover, destroys the *nature* of a sacrament, for it destroys the *sign*, by doing away with the bread, and the *thing signified*, by taking away from Christ's body its quantity or extension; and thus it destroys the analogy between both, by removing the basis of the sacramental relation. It also destroys the nature of *real conversion* or *change*, which requires that the thing, into which another is changed, should be produced anew. Besides, there is no need of a transubstantiation in the supper, any more than in baptism, in which the water is not changed into Christ's blood. Finally, transubstantiation takes place, either by the annihilation of the bread, or by the transformation of it into Christ's body; if the former, it is not transubstantiation, but merely the substitution of Christ's body in the place of the bread; if the latter, then the body must be formed out of the bread. Again, the body of Christ is either produced in the Eucharist, or it is brought

down from heaven; it cannot be said to be ***produced;*** for if it were produced, either from nothing, or from bread, or from any other substance, it would not be the same as the body of Christ which is in heaven: neither can it be said to be *brought down* from thence, because, as just hinted, it would not then be a real transubstantiation.

Another question to be examined is, in what sense we "eat the flesh of Christ" in the sacrament. (John vi. 53.) Now that this is not a carnal eating, is evident; because in this way the most sacred and glorious body of Christ, being received into the stomach, would be subjected to a great variety of filth and impurities. Not to mention what some have added, that it would be impious, as being cannibalism; hence Augustine proves that the term *to eat* is figurative, because otherwise Christ would command us to do what is a crime. Besides, this carnal eating is impossible, the body of Christ being in heaven; and it is also useless, since the spiritual eating alone is sufficient for salvation; whereas the former can be done by the wicked, who are not saved; nor does such a mode of eating contribute to any real union of Christ's flesh with ours; our communion with him being of a spiritual nature, through faith and the Holy Spirit; nor to union with God, for the same reason; nor to our resurrection, which is ascribed to the Spirit of Christ; nor to the demonstration of Christ's love towards his church, which he sufficiently displayed by his death, and by his betrothing the church.

We need not be surprised that Christ used this metaphor; he did so, following the custom of the scriptures, in shadowing forth spiritual by carnal objects; because also this metaphor is very suitable to denote our communion with Christ; and Christ adapted his expressions to the comprehension of his disciples, borrowing them from objects which were before their eyes; thus he had performed the miracle of the loaves, and had been, previously to these expressions, speaking of the manna. Lastly, he was thus pleased to oppose his flesh to the legal sacrifices, offered for sin, which it was not lawful to eat, neither flesh, nor blood; thereby denoting the insufficiency of such sacrifices, which were consumed by the fire of divine justice, so that nothing was left of them for the nourishment of the people. Christ might, indeed, have alluded to the permission which the priests had, to eat of the flesh of the victims, after the sacrifice

was over; or to the fact that it was given to the people to eat of their thank-offerings. Now the flesh of Christ is thus spiritually eaten, by constant meditation on his passion, and by application of his merits to ourselves. Augustine, therefore, rightly says, *Why dost thou prepare thy teeth, and thy stomach? Believe! thou hast eaten! This is to eat of that food, and drink of that potion, viz. to abide in Christ, and to have him abiding in you.*

With respect to the *communion in both kinds*, we maintain, that we ought to do the same as Christ did, and not to violate his institution and commandment. Now, Christ said, "drink ye all of it," (the cup,) as well as "take, eat;" he instituted the eucharist under both symbols, saying, "Do this in remembrance of me." Paul also, giving an account of this institution, enforces on the Corinthian church the duty of taking both kinds. (1 Cor. x. 16; xi. 26, 28.) Besides, the mutilation of the sacrament by withholding the cup, violates the two-fold purpose of its institution, viz. to be a commemoration of Christ's death, which is excellently set forth under two separate signs, denoting the separation of his blood from his body; and also to be a symbol of our complete nourishment by Christ.

The communion in both kinds was always celebrated by the ancient church till the council of Constance, held A. D. 1415, as appears from the testimony of Justin, Irenæus, Tertullian, Origen, Cyprian, Chrysostom, Jerome, Augustine, and a host of others. To which we may subjoin, as worthy of notice, the testimonies of Popes Leo and Gelasius. The words of the former are these: *When they (the Manichees) dare to be present at our mysteries, in order to conceal their infidelity, they so manage themselves in the communion, that sometimes in order to conceal themselves more securely, they receive with their unworthy mouths the body of Christ; but they altogether refuse to drink the blood of our redemption.* Gelasius issued the following order, which is found in Gratian, and recorded by the old canonists, *We find that some persons receive only a portion of the sacred body, and abstain from the cup of the sacred blood. Let such, restrained as they are by some superstition or other, either receive the sacrament entire, or be excluded from it altogether; for the division of one and the same mystery cannot take place without the greatest sacrilege.* At the Synod of Clermont also, A. D., 1095, Pope Urban en-

acted a law, that *the body of the Lord, and the blood of the Lord, should be taken separately.*

Two questions yet remain to be considered; the one is, whether in the eucharist there be offered to God an outward sacrifice, properly so called, which is really propitiatory for the sins of the quick and the dead. We maintain that there is no such sacrifice in the church of Christ, but only the sacrifice of Christ once offered on the cross, which we maintain cannot and ought not to be repeated. This we prove, 1. Because the scripture no where teaches it; which yet it would not have passed by, if there were such a sacrifice, since there were numberless motives for propounding such a doctrine, considering the importance of so great a mystery, and the difficulty of believing it. 2. Because the institution of the eucharist has no resemblance to a sacrifice. Christ in the Supper did not stand at an altar to sacrifice himself, but consecrated bread and wine, and distributed them to his disciples, commanding them to do the same thing. 3. Because Christ is the only priest of the New Testament, the "priest after the order of Melchizedek," without any successor, (Heb. vii. 17.) 4. The scripture mentions only one sacrifice, that of Christ, who offered himself "not often," but "once," (Heb. vii. 26; ix. 25, 27, 28; x. 10.) 5. To a propitiatory sacrifice is required the shedding of blood, and the death of a victim, "without which there is no remission," (Heb. ix. 22;) but in the sacrament there is no such blood-shedding. 6. What is perfect in all its parts, cannot and ought not to be repeated; but such is the priesthood of Christ, who "by one offering hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified," (Heb. x. 14.) Since Christ by offering himself on the cross hath obtained for us remission of sins, why should we seek any other sacrifice? "for where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin," (Heb. x. 18.)

We do not indeed deny that mention is made of an "altar" in Heb. xiii. 10, but that altar is Christ; who is called our altar, in reference to his cross, on which his body was offered, and which answers to the altar of burnt-offering (under the law); not that the cross should properly be called an altar, for the altar sanctifies the victim, whereas the cross by no means sanctified Christ. Christ is also so called, as being in heaven, interceding for us, and this corresponds with the altar of incense; he is an altar also at the holy supper, or in reference to

his own table, because he is there presented for our nourishment, as was the flesh of the victims formerly sacrificed on the altar. We also admit that the fathers use the words *sacrifice and oblation*, in reference to the sacrament. But this was done to meet the objections of the Jews and heathens, and to show that the church of Christ was not destitute of sacrifice; because the sacrament is a commemoration of the sacrifice of Christ; because of the prayers and hymns which were offered and sung at this holy rite, and which do come under the denomination of sacrifice; and because it was composd of gifts and oblations of bread and wine, both for the celebration of the sacred feast, and for the relief of the poor.

It only remains for us to add a word or two concerning the *adoration of the eucharist*. It is indeed allowed that reverence is due to the bread and wine; both on account of the majesty of him who appointed their use, and the excellency of the blessings which they seal, and the religious use which is made of them. But we deny that the sacrament is to be worshipped, which we prove by the following arguments. First, this adoration is nowhere enjoined; we are commanded to take the bread, to drink the wine, to do all in remembrance of Christ, but nowhere are we commanded to worship the symbols. Again, we do not read of the apostles doing so; on the contrary, they were sitting or reclining, when Christ celebrated the supper; nor is it any where said that they fell down upon their knees before the bread, when Christ presented it to them. Besides, the body of Christ (which is supposed to be worshipped) is not in the eucharist, as we have already proved. Moreover, the ancient church never maintained such an opinion. Justin Martyr, who gives a description of the entire ceremony, makes no mention of any adoration. Irenæus, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Cyprian, Origen, are silent concerning it. There is nothing of the kind in the liturgies, which came forth under the names of Peter, James, and Mark, nor in that which is extant in the book of Apostolical Constitutions, nor in the writings of the Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, who expressly treats of the celebration of the eucharist. It is further proved, from the circumstance of the fathers generally calling the sacrament, even in the very act of communion, by the names *bread and wine*, *bread*, *the fruit of the vine*, *the fruit of the harvest*, which they would not

have done, had they wished to teach the doctrine of its adoration. Also from their sending the sacred symbols to the absent without any ceremony; also from its being allowed among the ancients, to anoint the bodies of the sick with the elements, to use the sacred wine for writing, in the place of ink, to bury the sacred portions (of bread) with the bodies of the faithful, and after the communion was over, to burn, or to throw down a well, whatever was left. Also from the silence of the heathens and Jews on this subject; who without doubt would have taxed the Christians with this adoration, as the Mahometans, Jews, and philosophers, actually did after the eleventh century. And the fathers not only condemn those who worship things that require human aid, and need the protection of walls, bolts, and bars, but also maintain it to be the height of insanity to worship that which is eaten; as Theodoret, and others, which Averroes himself acknowledged, who said, as Cardinal Peronius relates, 'that he found no sect more silly or worse than the Christian sect, (i. e. the Roman Catholic,) the followers of which tear and devour with their teeth the god that they worship.' Finally, we prove that the eucharist is not to be worshipped, because, even if the body of Christ were really present, it would not follow that it ought to be worshipped, since the deity of Christ alone is the object of adoration. Now that this deity should not be adored in the sacrament, is plain from this, that it would otherwise follow that it was to be adored in baptism, where Christ is equally present, as in the supper. But it is certain that we are not obliged to worship God, at least with an *external* worship, in whatever place he is present, but only where he is present with the rays of his glorious majesty, and where he is pleased to be worshipped; otherwise he would have to be worshipped in trees and animals. He is to be worshipped as being in heaven, where he reveals his glory, as he was formerly worshipped at the ark in the tabernacle, because he there revealed himself. Christ, therefore, is to be adored, not the sacrament of the eucharist. To this adorable Saviour, with the Father, and the Holy Spirit, be praise and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

THE END.

Stereotyped by S. DOUGLAS WYETH, No. 7 Pear St. Philadelphia.

Printed by W. S. MARTIEN.

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